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VOL. V.

THE O'BRIENS AND THE O'FLAHERTYS. VOL. IV.

HEIDELBERG:

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HEIDELBERG:
PUBLISHED BY J. C. NEUBERGER.
1850.

THE
O'BRIENS
AND THE
O'FLAHERTYS.
A NATIONAL TALE.

BY LADY MORGAN.

„A Plaque o'both your Houses!“

SHAKSPEARE.

„Je me suis enquis au mielx que j'ai sçeu et pu; et je certifie à tous que ne l'ay fait ny pour or, ny pour argent, ny pour salaire, ny pour compte à faire qui soit, ny homme ny femme qui vescu: ne voulant ainsi favoriser ny blamer nul à mon pouvoir fors seulement déclarer les choses advenues.“

DU CLERCQ — *Préface des Chroniques.*

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. IV.

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A NATIONAL TALE
BY LADY MORGAN.

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VOLUME IV.
LONDON: J. B. LIPPINCOTT & CO., 15, ADELPHI WICK, 1888.

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THE
O'BRIENS
AND THE
O'FLAHERTYS.

CHAPTER I.
BOG MOY HOUSE.

Sic siti lætantur lares.

The ruin speaks that some time it was a worthy building.

Cymbeline.

LORD ARRANMORE had just returned from the refreshing luxury of a sea bath, on the following morning, when the opportune arrival of a Galway carrier enabled him to appear before his aunts, with such advantages of dress, as never fail to have their value, when brought to the aid of great personal endowments. As soon as he had breakfasted, and given his pony in charge to the „garloch,“ who was to ride it to Bog Moy, he freighted the St Grellan chaise (the only public vehicle in the town), with his books and wardrobe; and committing

himself fearlessly to its dislocating machinery, set off for Bog Moy.

Twelve years had so changed and improved his appearance, that if there were any persons in the town of St Grellan, retaining a recollection of the young Clan Tieg O'Brien of Arran, who now saw him, they no longer recognized in the elegant foreign-looking stranger, who had „put up at the O'Flaherty Arms,“ the ungainly, but comely boy, whose early talents and boyish adventures had left a due impression behind them, and were still the theme of occasional gossip over the winter's fire in the neighbourhood.

It was not till half an hour before his departure, that the address on his luggage announced him to his host as Lord Arranmore, whose father's funeral had recently passed through St Grellan, on its way for embarkation to the isles.

The Connaught imagination immediately took wing. Rank, riches, a colonelcy in the Irish Brigade, and a claim to half the estates in the province, were soon added; and before Lord Arranmore entered his chaise, the news had fled through the High-street, reached the Cladagh, brought a crowd of idlers, beggars, and Isle of Arran boys, to the door, and filled all the windows in the town with gazers, of that sex, which, accused every where of the habit of window-gazing, more inveterately indulge it in the country towns of Ireland, even

than in those of Spain. It was as dreary and drizzling a day as the „great father of waters,“ the Atlantic, ever sent to throw gloom over the town of St Grellan, when Lord Arranmore began his short journey to Bog Moy. The day was, besides, a great catholic holiday, the festival of St Grellan, the patron saint of the Ballyboe. The streets were all mud, the houses all smoke, and the gaiety of the town was still further eclipsed by the shops being half shut. He in vain endeavoured to recall, as the chaise jolted through the long, ill-paved, and rutted street, the „fair city that lifted herself on high,“ in the imagination of his boyhood. All its dimensions seemed contracted: the High-street and Four-ways (the *corso* and the *carrefour* of his childish admiration), whose splendour and bustle used to fill him with wonder, when he came in from the isles, or the mountains, now seemed dwindled and deserted. In the Four-ways, however, appeared groups, which identified its old destination: it was surrounded by shebean and pot-houses, and filled with females squatted in the mud, and selling Connemara stockings, eggs, fish, and other vendible commodities; while spalpeens and cottiers, leaning on their sleaghans* and scythes, lounged around the great stone cross in the centre, waiting to be hired after mass, and too often waiting in vain.

The High-street, too, was distinguished by

* Turf spades.

many of its old features. It was still paraded by those *batteurs du pavé* in all Irish towns, the squireens; some galloping ostentatiously through the town on their new hunters, purchased by an I. O. U., more readily given, than redeemed; while the dismounted cavalry, seated on the counters of the best shops, amused their strenuous idleness with such „bald, disjointed chat” as the news of the neighbourhood furnished them withal, repaying with a horse-laugh and a halfpenny the wit of the half-idiot, half-knave, who stood at the door, or bestowing a largess of equal value on the mendicant cripple, who, packed into a barrow, was wheeled from door to door by the „christian” for charity (ready „to do that, or more, for sweet Jesus’s sake”), or by the buckeens, who would do that, or anything, „just for fun, or a bit of a frolic.”

Early as it was, the belles of St Grellan were already clacking their pattens to prayers or parade, equally earnest in their double vocation of faith and flirtation; or were seen dangling their legs over the sides of a low-backed car, on their way to the „salt watter;” while the few not thus employed with this world or the next, sat suspended, like Mahomet’s coffin, between both, in their window; too much occupied with other persons’ affairs, to be very attentive to their own. From all these, the pochay of the O’Flaherty Arms elicited observation and comments; not only from the un-

usual circumstance of the turn out itself (a rare event), but from the handsome head put forward alternately from every window, not permanently closed by a wooden blind. All who had heard of the arrival of Lord Arranmore at once recognized the stranger (who was taking the coast road to Bog Moy, the tide being out), to be the son of the well-known, though long absent Baron O'Brien; and all who had not heard of that event, were full of queries and conjectures concerning the *che shin*,* whose black stock denoted his military calling, and whose unpowdered head was an innovation that portended some revolution in the Galway fashions, which had held their ground unchanged since the days of George the Second, and the great Lord Clanrickard.

Among the spectators of him whose „youth and comeliness did pluck all gaze his way,” there were two, in whom his apparition, as he passed the bay window at which they were stationed, struck especial emotion,

As though they saw some wond'rous monument.

These were the widow and Miss Costello, the friends and gossips of the Miss Mac Taafs, by whom the event of Lord Arranmore's arrival was devoutly wished, and long looked-for. From this watch tower of their perpetual vigilance, where, „from morn till noon, from

* Literally, „Who is that?” a notable person.

noon till dewy eve," entrenched in snuff-boxes and pocket-handkerchiefs, with their knitting in their hands, with Pastorini's prophecies on one side, and Betsy Thoughtless on the other, they took cognizance of every transaction, private and public, religious and commercial, that occurred in the town. No little voteen picked her way to mass in the morning or mall in the evening; no dry-dum was given by the dowagers of one sex, nor jorum of punch by the dowagers of the other; not a pair of Connemara stockings was sold in the Four-ways, nor a basket of fish disposed of in the Cladagh, to the cadgers of Galway and Tuam, without their knowledge and commentary.

In the handsome head thrust through the left window of the St Grellan chaise, and in the dark, bright eyes, raised to the widow's bay window, which she construed into a look of recognition, the ladies at once discovered the long-expected and often talked-of guest of Bog Moy; for whose sake many an intended party, and above all the „*Jug Day*,” * two years in contemplation, at Bog Moy, had been deferred by their dear friends, the Miss Mac Taafs.

„I declare to Jasus, Prudence Costello,”

* The Jug Day was that, on which a pipe of claret, imported from France, was first broached in the old Connaught kouses: and when the friends and neighbours were invited to give their opinions of the merit of the importation.

exclaimed the widow, as the old chaise rattled by, and the fine eyes flashed upwards, „I declare to Jasus, if that ar'n't Lord Arranmore at last, gone the coast road to Bog Moy! Why don't you return his salute, girl?”

Prudence Costello did return the salute tenfold; if a slight inclination of the head, extorted by „the nods, and becks, and wreathed smiles” of the widow, could be so called. Throwing back a door, which literally opened into the kitchen (according to the Connaught establishment of that day, when every story had its own kitchen), the widow cried out, „Mary Blake, slip on your Connemaras, and run down to the O'Flaherty Arms, and inquire if it's Lord Arranmore that has just set off by the coast-road in the pochay, that's my girleen.”

Mary Blake dropped her work „right willingly; and without waiting to slip on her Connemara stockings, slipped her feet into her pumps, and ran down to the O'Flaherty Arms. The intelligence she brought back was of a nature to induce the widow Costello to expedite an order to Jemmy Lynch to have the car at the door by three o'clock: „for we're going to take tay at Bog Moy the evening.”

The best quilt and feather-bed were put in requisition for the service of the low-backed car; and the sober wardrobe of the widow and Miss Costello (the one still affecting weeds as

an inconsolable widow, and the other black, as a sentimental devotee, inconsolable for being neither widow nor wife), supplied its most becoming gravities, for welcoming home one whom they considered as hereditary prince of the Isles of Arran, the Lord of Arranmore, and the heir of Bog Moy and Ballyslattery.

Never had Lord Arranmore, in his wanderings in far distant lands, looked upon scenes of classic association with more intense interest and curiosity, than he now sought out objects familiar to his recollection, on the road from St Grellan to Bog Moy; a road once so well known, but which seemed so strangely changed, since he had „plucked geese, played truant, and whipped top” on it. Nothing could be more dreary or desolate than the country through which he was passing, there was nothing to meet the feelings of the most moderate philanthropist, or to satisfy the hopes of the least sanguine agriculturist; — nothing either prosperous or picturesque. There were but few symptoms of artificial cultivation, and no neat farming, no close enclosures, no secure fences, no budding hedgerows, and doubled-faced ditches, no sod or pipe drains, nor one faint dawning ray of the new light of modern husbandry. The agricultural state of the province was represented by swampy fields for pasturage, divided by stone mearings, with patches of earth, as yet unsown, but intended

for a scanty provision of corn (for little grain was then raised in a land which had once supplied foreign markets).^{*} Of the old woods which once fringed the bases of the Connemara hills, and of which some stunted remains were still visible in his childhood, there was now as little trace, as of any attempt at new and improving plantation; and to one more deeply read in the Irish story, than apprized of the actual state of Ireland, the name of the *woody island* would have appeared to have been given to it in irony or in reproach. The axe of the stranger had indeed been early laid to the root of the Irish forests, when they were the only fortresses of the brave hardy native, — when to cut down an army it was necessary to root up a wood, — and when heroes and oaks, Irish champions and Scotch firs, fell together. The little, however, which was then spared, fell before the wants of the people, in the beginning of the eighteenth century. The noblest

* “The people had not the folly to improve the property they had scarcely rescued from the gripe of forfeiture, being aware that its cultivation only invited fresh litigation. Thus Warner observes: ‘Whereas permanency of tenure, stable property, and even durable security in land or money, are prohibited the Irish papists by law, which obliges them to keep their lands waste, instead of improving them, in order to prevent, as much as possible, any temptation to leases in reversion, which protestants only can take.’ ” — History of Ireland.

forest trees were consumed as fuel, and the uncertainty of every tenure, under the penal code, at the period, prevented that succession of coppice and planting, which might soon have supplied the place of the original produce. The mansions of the gentry were few and desolate; and the neglect and discomfort of their exterior gave no adequate idea of the quantity of claret drank at a vast expense in the interior. The population was as dreary as the country, being made up of a few squalid beggars, on their way to increase the mendicity of Galway town, or to be shipped off to the West Indies, — an occasional pedestrian, going from Bally to Bally, with his brogues and hose on his shoulders instead of his feet, — or perhaps a scollog and his wife mounted, on a barebacked garron, only shod before, according to the economy of those times. Here and there an equestrian of the higher order, the squireen, followed by his wise man, driver, or overseer, was distinguished afar off by the naked children, peopling every dunghill, as a „brass-buttoned gentleman.”

Lord Arranmore's first glance at Bog Moy convinced him that there, at least, nothing had been changed. The morass or boggy plain, in which it stood, was as unreclaimed, as when he had last shot snipes upon it, within a few paces of the house. In the midst of its brown surface appeared the only verdant spot in the demesne, a horsepond in its „mantle of green.”

There, still flourished, or decayed, a few old stunted trees, called the Orchard or „*Avalgort*,“ with a mound covered with furze, called the „*Fin avain*,“ or Vinery.* There too mouldered the ancient Dovecote; and the well of „sweet water,“ under its vaulted arch of rudely cut stone; a wall of stone or clay encompassed the bawn (a square of two hundred feet), the only pleasure-ground, which in former times „the unquiet state of the land“ permitted to the gentry of Ireland. Up to the commencement of the last century, the flocks of the most wealthy landholders were attended by armed herdsman, who with spears for crooks, took their watch in the morning upon some high crag, to spy the neighbouring enemy, and at night drove their charge into the bawn, which afforded shelter alike for man and for beast. The bawn had been flanked by four square towers; one of which was in good preservation, and distinguished by the name of the Brigadier's Tower. Not so the mansion. Since Lord Arranmore had seen it, it had become confusion worse confounded; preserving the remains of all the various changes from its first erection of „cage-work and couples,“ through its progress of clay and stone and

* In an old Irish almanack of the fourteenth century once in the possession of Colonel Valleney, the time of gathering grapes and drinking the new wine is mentioned.

lime; „a castle begun,” and a modern mansion never finished. On the outside of the bawn walls, rose a cluster of hovels, whose smoke rolled in masses from their chimnies down upon the road. These were the remains of the dwellings of tenants „planted and estated on the land,” who had once been returned as constituting eleven families able to make twenty-five men at arms, and now the shelter of a band of Miss Mac Taaf’s cottiers or under-tenants. It was dignified by the name of the town of Bog Moy.

Lord Arranmore drew up before one of these huts, which lying next the bawn gateway (without a gate), served as the lodge: and on the gassoon’s inquiry, in Irish, if the Ban Tiernas were at home, the answer was given, that they were on the little bog convenient to the place. The future lord of Bog Moy alighted; and ordering the chaise and pony to proceed to the house, took a little „thatched headed” urchin for his guide, and walked towards the bog which was so convenient, as to be separated from the pleasure-ground or gardener-plot only by the dilapidated walls of the bawn. A „mearing” of loose stones marked the separation of this favourite bit of bog from the turlogh through which its red veins ran.

Upon this meering Lord Arranmore leaned for a moment, to contemplate the singular

scene and well-remembered persons before him. The Miss Mac Taafs were both on the ground, and both standing enough in profile, to give him a full and perfect view of their figure, without being seen by them. His first opinion was, that they were utterly unchanged; and that like the dried specimens of natural history, they had bidden defiance to time. Tall, stately, and erect, their weather-beaten countenance and strongly marked features were neither faded, nor fallen in. The deep red hue of a frosty and vigorous senility still coloured their unwrinkled faces. Their hair, well powdered and pomatumed, was drawn up by the roots from their high foreheads, over their lofty „systems;” and their long, lank necks, rose like towers, above their projecting busts; which with their straight, sticky, tight-laced waists, terminating in the artificial rotundity of a half-dress bell-hoop, gave them the proportions of an hour-glass. They wore grey camlet riding habits, with large black Birmingham buttons (to mark the slight mourning for their deceased brother-in-law); while petticoats, fastened as pins did or did not their office, shewed more of the quilted marseilles and stuff beneath, than the precision of the toilet required: both of which, from their contact with the water of the bog, merited the epithet of „Slappersallagh,” bestowed on their wearers by Terence O'Brien.

Their habit-shirts, chitterlings, and cravats, though trimmed with Trawlee lace, seemed by their colour to evince that yellow starch, put out of fashion by the ruff of the murderous Mrs Turner in England, was still to be had in Ireland. Their large, broad silver watches, pendant from their girdles by massy steel chains, shewed that their owners took as little account of time, as time had taken of them. „Worn for show, not use,” they were still without those hands, which it had been in the contemplation of the Miss Mac Taafs to have replaced by the first opportunity, for the last five years. High-crowned black-beaver hats, with two stiff, upright, black feathers, that seemed to bridle like their wearers, and a large buckle and band, completed the costume of these venerable specimens of human architecture: the *tout-ensemble* recalling to the nephew the very figures and dresses, which had struck him with admiration and awe, when first brought in from the Isles of Arràn, by his foster mother, to pay his duty to his aunts, and ask their blessing, eighteen years before.

The Miss Mac Taafs, in their sixty - first year (for they were twins), might have sunk with safety ten or twelve years of their age. Their minds and persons were composed of that fibre which constitutes nature's veriest huckaback. Impressions fell lightly on both; and years and feelings alike left them unworn and uninjured.

The eldest Miss Mac Taaf, — the eldest but by an hour, the representative of the Green Knights and Barons of Ballyslattery, who stood erect, with her right hand leaning on a walking-cane umbrella, was laying down the law in a loud oracular voice, sometimes in Irish, sometimes in English, to an old man, who stood bareheaded and footed before her. Her directions, though evidently „the law and the gospel,” were strengthened by an occasional reference, to a person, who sat on a clump of turf, with pen and paper in hand, and an ink-horn at his button-hole; such as, „and here James Kelly will tell you the same, Dan Hogan; and you know we consider James Kelly as the sensekeeper of Bog Moy; to which assertion, James Kelly, by a confirmatory nod of the head, fully assented.

While Miss Mac Taaf and her premier were thus engaged in the legislative department, Miss Monica was busily employed in the executive. She stood a little in advance, her back supported against a turfclump. Paddy Whack was seated beside her on his hinder legs, and was looking into her face, watching for the stick which she occasionally threw into the water, „to keep the baste quiet.” She was, however, then occupied in counting the kishes of turf wheeled off, and receiving a tally from each driver as he passed, which she strung upon a cord. Sometimes chiding, sometimes

praising, frequently soliciting, and always interfering, she kept up a constant fire of words, which were answered with more respect than coherency, by the rustic interlocutors, „Thady Flaherty, it's what I hear, your bracket cow calved last week, and your woman never sent up a drop of the strippings * to the great house.”

„Och! then she won't be so, Marram, I'll engage, God bless you, Miss Monica.”

„Drop that chip of bog wood now, Jemmeen Joyce; is it to stale the timber, ye were let to come and help your daddy on the bog?”

„Onor ny Costello, where's the tribute hose ye were knitting for me, in lieu of the ducks?”

„What is it ye are grubbing up there, instead of clamping the sods? Show it here now: is it another copper Shamus?” **

„No, plaze your honour, Miss Monica, Marram; it's an ould horse-shoe, the great luck!”

„Well, if it's only an old neile, I have often told you, that, as ladies of the manor, we have right and title to every screed found on the Fassagh. Take it up to the great house, Onor ny Costello.”

Thus occupied during some hours, they were

* The first milk after the calf is dropped.

** „A copper James;” i. e. one of James the Second's copper tokens, issued during his short reign in Ireland.

on the point of breaking up their council, as the sun in its course announced the hour which gathered the cottiers to their mid-day meal of potatoes and milk at the great house, when a little gassoon ran up to Miss Mac Taaf, and presented her a slip of paper, on which was written, „A stranger claims *connagh* and *meales* of the ladies of Bog Moy, after the old fashion of Irish hospitality.”

Miss Mac Taaf put on her spectacles to read this note, which Miss Monica perused, over her sister's shoulder. Both ladies raised their large Irish eyes, when the gassoon, in answer to their *che shin* (who is it?) pointed to the writer. They looked earnestly, and moved forward with stateliness, when the stranger, vaulting lightly over the mearing, took a hand of each lady, and pressed it with equal grace and cordiality to his lips: exclaiming, „My dear aunts, has Murrough O'Brien no longer a place in your recollection?”

„Chroist Jeesus, Murrough O'Brien, is it you choild?” demanded both ladies, in a breath, and with a pleasurable amazement, tempered by that habitual stateliness, with which no emotion, either of pleasure or of pain, ever materially interfered.

Equally charmed at the arrival of their titled nephew, and struck by the change in his person, they stood returning with cordial interest, the shake of the hand which followed his more

courtly salutation. Looking with eyes eloquent in their curiosity and surprise, they continued welcoming him to Bog Moy, and passing comments on his person and dress, in rapid alternation; while James Kelly and Paddy Whack, now both „on their legs,” stood wondering and waiting for an explanation (the one bowing his head, the other wagging his tail): *sheagans* and shovels were suspended; borrows stood still, and ears and eyes, all opened to their fullest extent, soon conveyed to the gossiping followers of the Mac Taafs, the welcome news that the mistress's nephew, the heir of Bog Moy, and Clan Tieg O'Brien of the Isles, had arrived among them, by the style and title (soon announced) of Lord Arranmore. *Cau-beens* and *barrads* were now flung in the air, the „*chree*” of the Mac Taafs was raised by the men, taken up by the women, and sent back by the boys; and was followed by the burden of an old Irish song, that always comes so readily to Irish lips:

Welcome, heartily,
Welcome, Grammachree;
Welcome, heartily,
Welcome, joy.

A half holiday was now asked for and granted, and a half cruiskeen* was voluntarily promised; and these modern representatives of the

* Gruiskeen, — a pitcher. Thus used absolutely, the contained liquor understood is always whiskey.

old Irish Clans, showering blessings on the party, which now together quitted the bog for the bawn, were left to enjoy the hope of idleness and poteen, the only enjoyments and luxuries with which they were acquainted.

Lord Arranmore, with an arm of either aunt drawn through his own, and with ears that lent themselves more readily to their questions, than his tongue did to the answers they required, proceeded with them to the house, accompanied by Paddy Whack and James Kelly; the former trotting behind, the latter somewhat in advance, on his way to announce in the kitchen the arrival of the young Lord and Tierna. Meantime, inquiries were intermingled with sarcasms on the recent life, conversion, and death of O'Brien's father; on the arts and seductions of the confraternity at Cong; on his own situation and appearance; together with references to his visit to the Retreat; hopes of his unaltered attachment to the church established; hints at their own intentions in his favour; and an implied conviction that he was now come home to „settle down for life at Bog Moy, which, sooner or later, would be his own;” the whole composing a farrago, uttered by the elder, and reiterated by her *double*, the younger Miss Mac Taaf, to which it would have been impossible to have made reply or observation. None indeed was expected; the volubility of the Miss Mac Taafs was a *sostenuto*, uninter-

rupted by any inflexion of tone, or pause of ideas; and their habits of dictation, and their confidence in their own infallibility (the natural self-sufficiency of persons living out of the world), excluded all chance of expressing either a difference or a coincidence with their opinions.

Their nephew, however, was in a temper to be amused with every thing, and annoyed by nothing: and when Miss Mac Taaf observed, in the pompous accent, which Irish provincial ladies assume to subdue the peculiar brogue of their province, „But choild, I am amazed to see you as peel as peeper, and as thin as a lauth. Whoy, I expected to see you with cheeks as red as roses, and shoulders the full of a door,” — he replied:

„Campaigns through half Europe, dear aunt, and a typhus in Ireland, with other recent and melancholy events, but little favourable to the roses of high health, have, indeed, sent me back to you something less florid and fleshy, than when I was wont to come to Bog Moy, to shoot snipes at Christmas, and to fatten on cream and honey with poor old Norah ny Costello.”

„Well, choild, never moind; though poor Norah is gone, the crame and honey are to the fore; and I'll ingage, you won't be long at Bog Moy, till you are as stout as big Ben Joyce, and as fresh-coloured as the Flaherties

of Killery. So, I hear, you got pandy at college, for getting into a 'ruction' as young Counsellor Costello wrote down to the widow. Well, sorrow pity you, Murrough O'Brien; what call had you there, you (that had been in great furreign colleges, and living with kings and emperors abroad, and in the high road to be a field-marshal, like your great uncle), to come back and make a schoolboy of yourself, instead of coming down at once to Bog Moy House, where pace and plinty, and the heartiest of welcomes awaited you, and every comfort in life; and heir, as it is well known you are, far and near, to the toitles and estates belonging thereto, and the country round ready to be cap in hand to you. And there it stands," added Miss Mac Taaf, passing through a breach made in the bawn wall, by the brawny shoulders of the herd, who thus gave ingress and egress to the cattle, collected as of old, within its protecting circle — „there it stands, just as you left it; and a troifle will make it the prettiest pile in Connaught, as it is the oldest, except the Abbey and Castle of Moycullen. And have it in contemplation to take down the rist of the old roof, and o'her great improvements, plaze God; and there you see is the bee (bay) of St Grellan, forenent ye, and the mountains of Connemara to your rare."

Lord Arranmore was much pleased by the manner in which his aunts had taken the affair

of his expulsion; and cheered by their affectionate reception, he beheld even the dreary and dilapidated mansion (to which they were, with such pride and pleasure, conducting him), with less disgust than he would have done, under feelings less gracious than those, for which his mountain journey, and returning health and spirits, had prepared him. Still he was struck with the slovenliness, and disorder, and strange substitutions of the bawn and house. An old cart stopped up the gateway, to keep out the stray cattle and the cottiers; an old hat was thrust through the broken pane in the hall-door fanlight; the offices were lying in ruins to the left; and to the right, the garden plot, where still many a flower grew, encumbered with weeds, marked a fatal inattention to that order and arrangement, which, wherever they exist, are the surest signs of civilization and security. The ancient seat of one of the oldest protestant families in the country, was indeed stamped with all those tokens of thriftlessness and neglect, which prejudice falsely, invidiously, and exclusively assigns to the catholic population of Ireland.

Lord Arranmore remembered the respect and admiration he had formerly felt for Bog Moy House, and was surprised to find how much it had shrunk in dimensions and grandeur, in an imagination schooled by the experience of

„other and better worlds.” Yet, minor and trivial dilapidations excepted, nothing was changed in the interval of his absence. The fallen roof, which had caused the wing it had once covered to be shut up, had been overthrown forty years before. The beam which propped a tottering gable, was nearly as frail and decayed, as the ruin it upheld; and many a glassless window was still stopped, as in times of yore, with such materials as chance, „high arbiter,” had brought to hand in the hour of need. The parts of the building, however, which were habitable, were capable of accommodating many guests; the purpose for which, in the estimation of its truly hospitable and Irish owners, a house alone was built; and the Miss Mac Taafs, contented that this was the case, did not give an immediate or definite date to the improvements and restorations, which ever and anon floated „in their contemplation,” as they had done in that of their uncle, the Brigadier, before them, for nearly half a century.

At the approach of the party, the whole domestic establishment turned out to welcome their future lord; and from Granie-ny-Joyce (the second in rank and command to the *dames suzeraines* themselves), down to „the ould woman,” who for twenty years had occupied a stool near the *bocaen* or chimney corner, nobody knew why — (the *girleen baan*, the

boccah, and the boy about the place included)—all were assembled at the hall door. The only person „reported missing,” was James Kelly, who answered for his immediate appearance from the pantry, by replying to Miss Mac Taaf’s shrill cry of „Where are ye, James Kelly, and what are you about, man?” by exclaiming, „Arn’t I drawing on my state small, clothes, Miss Mac Taafs, in honour of his lordship?”

„Jeemes Kelly’s niver in the way, when most wanted,” said Miss Monica, as they entered the parlour.

„Why, then, that’s more than can be said of your pet, Monica Mac Taaf,” replied her sister, giving Paddy a kick, as he ran under her legs; „he’s always in the way, like the parish church, wanted or not. Aud now, choild,” she added, addressing her nephew with cordiality, „you are welcome to Bog Moy; and long may you live to enjoy it,” and she imprinted an audible kiss on either side of his face, after the French and old Irish fashion. Miss Monica reiterated the salutation, and Granie-ny-Joice, the *girleen baun*, and the „old woman,” who stood foremost of the group, near the parlour-door, seemed well inclined to follow the example. They were, however, dismissed in Irish, by Miss Mac Taaf, who seating herself on an old, ricketty, upright, straw-bottomed settee, and placing her kinsman beside her,

threw her eyes over his person with a scrutinizing glance.

„Well, Monica Mac Taaf,” she observed to her sister, who had taken the place on the other side, „would ye ever have known this fine *comhlindrah* * of a fellow here, to be the *stalking Voragah* ** that went off mitching twelve years ago, the Lord knows where.”

„Why, then, never would,” said Miss Monica, taking snuff, „only for the Mac Taaf nose, and his being the very moral of Sir Columb over the chimney, and ever was from a baby up, and liker now than ever.”

O'Brien raised his eye to Sir Columb, whose grim visage and lank figure in armour was so humorously frightful, that he rose to conceal the too ready smile it was impossible to suppress. Although the picture, like the rest of the furniture, was an old acquaintance, yet, as if it were a novelty, he now read aloud the inscription printed beneath:—

„This is the true pourtrayture of the courageous Colonell Sir Columb Mac Taaf, Knight, who routed Colonell Ingoldesby in his own diffence in the pass between Cong and Headfort, and was afterwards knighted for said service by bis excellencie the Duke of Tyrconnell.

* A handsome foppish fellow.

** *Stac na Voragah*, „the stake in the market place,” applied to any tall, ungainly person.

Sold by Patrick Smith, at y^e Cross and Bible, Backlane, 1652."

„Niver moind that now, choild," said Miss Mac Taaf, dictatorially, „but come and sit down here. You have seen that picture a million of times: you will find nothing changed here, thank God, since ye went. There is the voyadore you used to play Jack Straws on, and the sideboard, and the ancient ould buffet. And there is your great uncle Flavius's silver tankard, and the first cheny tay-pot ever used in the county Galway; and you see th' ould Persia carpet houlding to the fore: and hopes them will come after us will do the place as much justice as we have done."

„Ay," said Miss Monica, „I hope so too. It would be a great heart-break to see an iota changed in it."

„But Murrough, dear," continued Miss Mac Taaf, „(for its Murrogh we'll call you in private, after the ould fashion, and keep my lord for company), what sort of an head is that ye have got, without a dust of powder, or a taste of toupee? Why, boy, it's just the same curly *caen dub* that ye went away with."

„I hope you will find both heart and head as little changed as your own Bog Moy," said O'Brien, smiling.

„Oh, I'll ingage the heart's in the right place, choild; but for the head, Murrogh O'Brien, I'd be better plased to see it more in

the mode, and powdered, and buckled, with a fashionable club, like young Counsellor Costello's, and not like Jemmy Skirret's water dog."

„But, my dear aunt, I assure you it is in the very extreme of the fashion,—of the Paris fashion, at least,—where crêping and powdering are now as much out of date, as the long love-locks of my brave ancestor, Sir Columb, there."

„Why, what sort of a *Cauthah* * is it at all?" said Miss Mac Taaf, running her fingers through the luxuriant tresses of his hair.

„It is called the *Brutus* head," he replied, with some annoyance, and drawing back.

„Brutish enough!" interrupted Miss Mac Taaf, with a stately laugh, which was taken up by Miss Monica; „and would not take the half of what I'm worth, to show you with that head in the cathedral church of St Grellan, when the eyes of the whole congregation and the bishop's pew will be on you. Monica Mac Taaf, moind me to sind in the boy about the place for Gill Duff-na-Kiruwan in the morning to dress his hair like a christian, and bring out an assortment of cues, till his own grows naturally. You remember Gill Duff-na-Kiruwan, I'll ingage, Murrogh, 'system, tête, and perriwig maker,' in the High-street; and has the good blood in his veins for all

* The matted hair of the ancient Irish.

that, and might claim kin to the Castle-Kiruwans this day, high as they hould themselves. And I declare to goodness, Monica Mac Taaf, the creature ha'n't a rag of weepers to his cuffs, and he in father's mourning. Well, if your poor foolish mother was living, or if it was with ourselves ye had been left, it isn't in this neglected state you would have return'd to us. But never moind, choild; we'll tack you on something, and smarten ye up, agen the Jug Day: for we have it in contemplation to ask the county round, in regard of the tapping of the pipe of claret sent over to us by our cousins, French and Co., of Bourdeaux; and only waited for your coming home; and we'll get you, when you are rested a taste, to write cards of compliments for same. What's gone with th' ould pack, Monica, that stood in the buffet?"

„Why, shure, Jeemes Kelly carried them off to the kitchen before they were half done with, sister Mable, though I told him ye wanted them. But who dare gainsay Jeemes Kelly?"

„Why then, I'll shurely part with Jeemes Kelly when he laste thinks of it," said Miss Mac Taaf, whose partiality to her sense-keeper could not stand the loss of a pack of cards, which had not been more than three years on service; and which were destined to contain the compliments and invitations of the Jug Day.

„It's what he's getting the head of you entirely,” said Miss Monica, „and thinks the place is his own, as much as the brigadier ever did; and small blame to him, since it's yourself will let nobody cross him, and he disguised from morning till night. I would have him up before the altar, the first day Father Festus holds a station, and book-swear him too for a year and a day, against sup or drop. I'll ingage I'd make a good servant of you yet, Jemmy Kelly, if it's to me ye were left.”

„Well, there he is,” said her sister, angrily; „take him to yourself, Monica Mac Taaf, and do your worst with him; but as for turning out the cratur on the wide world, like a mangy hound, after twenty years' service, it's what I won't do, Monica Mac Taaf; and, indeed, has long had it in contimplation to make him own man and body servant to Murrogh, which would put him out of the way of temptation; for it's coshering and gostering with the tinants that lades him astray. And ye must have a man in livery to ride after ye, Murrogh; for you must go and make your obeissance to th' ould families; and, same time, Jeemes Kelly can drop cards for the Jug Day, and the sooner the better. For though you are a lord, we can't be sending out old Donagh-ni-Crone, the town-crier, to insense the people of your return, with a 'uaisht!

uaisht!' But you must mount your aunt Monica's filly, and ride first to the Lynches of Cloghballymore."

„And to the Burkes of Derry-na-Cloghna," said Miss Monica, rubbing up her recollection, as she rubbed her high forehead.

„And the Darcys of Kiltalla," said Miss Mac Taaf.

„And the O'Flaherties of Tallikihan," said her sister.

„And the Gno-beg O'Flaherty-more," added Miss Mac Taaf.

„And the Skirrets of Claer-yn-dowl and Ballyduff, and the Joyces of Joyce's country," continued Miss Monica.

„And the Drumshambos, and the Dangans, and the Marble Hills, and a *mille* * others," said her sister.

„For though," said Miss Mac Taaf, „we don't want to send you out to make cuttings on the county, like a Cromwellian scout-master, nor to make an house haunter, nor a wanderer, nor a wagger about streets and townlands, of you, like the young squirantry of the new comers, yet it is right ye should make yourself known to the ancient ould families, in and about county Galway, Mayo, and Clare, where you will meet with the greatest of respect, in regard of the Mac Taafs. And as to

* A thousand.

the O'Briens, I lave that to spake for itself; for being a lord and a nobleman, as you surely are, in right of your father, though if it was not for us, Terry O'Brien, and ours, and the Brigadier's coffer, and the great recourse ye had to us and it, and a black day it was, abducting and seducing that poor *omadaun* of a cratur, Bridget Mac Taaf, for which if ye did not rot in Galway jail, it's us ye had to thank for it; for it's laid down in the statutes, 'that if any person or persons, by fraud, flattery, fear, or false promises' — But far be it from us, choild, to make you suffer for the sins of your parents; so come, now, and we'll show you the ways of the place, and you shall chose your own bed in the barrack-room, out of six, for life, as I may say; only must be contint with a shake down in the Brigadier's tower, on the Jug Day, maning to put the four young Blakes, two Bells, and three Bodkins, in Bachelor's hall, as we call the barrack: and as to the six young O'Flaherties, it's little bed they'll trouble that night." The Misses Mac Taaf then rose, and sailing on majestically before their wearied and silent nephcw, showed off the lions of Bog Moy, with as much ostentatious pride in its fusty rooms, mouldering furniture, its make-shifts and substitutions, as the rural *Conte* of Romagna exhibits his „*apartimenti nobili*" to wondering travellers; and then retreats to his own slovenly attic,

to share with his domestic the *buona mano* which forms so considerable an *item* in his revenue.

Those who have basked in the sunshine of an Irish welcome, can alone tell how intoxicating is its cordiality; and how many sins against taste, manners, and even against the independence of its object, it redeems. Lord Arranmore, with all the fear before his eyes of Gill Duff-na-Kiruwan's créping irons, powder-puff, and scented pomatum, and his horror of the bed in the barrack-room, and the weepers to be tacked to his cuffs, with no faint forebodings of the diatribes to be dinned in his ears against his father's abduction of his mother, and the endless visitations to be made in Galway, Clare, and Mayo, was still more amused than annoyed, during the first hours after his arrival, by manners and habits, a phraseology and accent, which seemed wholly to have changed their character since he had last visited Bog Moy. His aunts, on their part, like all persons dwelling in solitude, to whom the least important event affords a sensation, were charmed to the extremest excitement by his arrival; and before the „boy about the place” followed the party to the Brigadier's tower, to announce that „dinner was dishing,” Lord Arranmore, with a jesuitism worthy of the school from which he had just issued, had subverted many of the rules, and repeal-

ed many of the laws, which threatened to intrench upon his personal independence, or habitual comforts. Point after point was gradually abandoned (for the time being, at least) to the insinuating earnestness, which in begging a respite, obtained a reprieve; and Miss Mac Taaf, unable to resist manners to which she was so wholly unaccustomed, and softened by a pleasurable excitement she so rarely experienced, yielded, without being conscious of her submission, to the suggestions of her nephew, or mistook them for her own —

E rendea ad ascoltar dolce concento.

This was indeed the sole, glorious, golden opportunity, which might ever occur for changing her high resolves: for to the newly arrived guest and restored friend, the Irish affections refuse nothing.

It was therefore agreed upon, that Lord Arranmore, to assert the privileges of his „order,” should await the visits of the neighbourhood; before he paid any; that during „the dry season,” he should occupy the only habitable room in the Brigadier’s tower (his foreign habits and campaigning life, as he observed, rendering an airy situation preferable to a close room, even with the *agrément* of six well-tenanted beds); that the créping irons of Gill Duff-na-Kiruwan should not be called into service, until his aunts gave the *Brutus* a trial, and

had endeavoured to reconcile themselves to its simplicity: and, lastly, an assurance that weepers were no longer worn at Court being solemnly pledged, the bill to reform his toilette was „ordered to be read that day six months.”

„And now,” said Miss Mac Taaf, as she stood in the embrasure of the loop-hole of the Brigadier’s tower, „I hope you are plased, choild, for ye see ye have your own way in every thing. Every man to his taste as Pat Foley said, when he kissed his cow: but how any living christian can prefer this lonely, ould gazebo here, away from every sowl, to the barrack-room, where there is always a chance of somebody dropping in, it’s what I can’t conceave. However, we’ll have the place readied up any how to-morrow for ye—and the swallow’s nests swept out of the chimney, and the Brigadier’s press-bed shaken well out, and a rattling turf fire kindled, to give it a sprightly look, and teebles and cheers put into the pleace. Then there’s the Brigadier’s fusil, and a map of the town lands, so you won’t want amusement: and to be shure, a finer view none need desire than lies round ye, with the best bit of red bog in the country under your nose, and forenent yon the mountains of Gonnemara, and the *bee* (bay) in your *rare* (rear). And look, choild, as far as you can see to the lift, that’s the gleamings of Lough Corrib;

and under the shelter of that mountain, which stands out bolt upright, ye may see th' ould woods, and new plantations of Beauregard, as them upstarts of Knocklofties call it, instead of the fine ould name of Clogh-na-Corrig, which—but Chroist Jasus, choild, what is it ails ye! Why, ye are as red as a turkey cock, and now again as peel as pceper.”

„I am perfectly well, aunt, only a little subject to flush, since my last illness,” said Lord Arranmore; and he added carelessly, „Is the Knocklofty family in the country?”

„Not that I heared tell, replied Miss Mac Taaf. „And now, Murrough O'Brien, Lord Arranmore, once for all, and not to trouble you any more on the subject, there is one earnest request I have to make to you, and that is, that I lay my solemn command and injunction on you, as yon value my feevour and regards, not to have any call or communication with any of the upstarts, patentees, or new comers of the pleece; among whom I reckon above all, the Hunks' family, and thim Knocklofties, who wasn't in existence two hundred years back, though they now look down upon th' ancient ould residents, and cut their jokes upon the 'neetives,' as that new Lady Knocklofty, and her friend Lady Honora, call'd us all, last summer, and that turn-coat, their poor cousin and follower, Miss Kitty Maguire, that sowl'd her religion for a mess

of pottage, and had the impudence to draw a pourtraiture of your aunt Monica and self, as the Leedies of *Cashlanne-na-Haliah*,* who scolded themselves to death, as the story goes. But if ould Dennis Daly dies (and he's not expected, I hear), they'll be running down to the country, and be wanting to put their *com-luaid* on Bog Moy, as they did afore. But vote or voice they'll not get from us or ours; for we'll support th' ould blood of the country against all the Cromwellians and Williamites in the land, and call upon and expect you

* The story goes, that two old ladies of the family of the O'Flahertys becoming heiresses to the castle in question, took possession of the towers which are still standing on Lough Corrib; but not being able to adjust the partition of the property, an endless cause of quarrel arose. One of these ladies was nearly blind, and the other sadly afflicted with the asthma. Day after day they scolded at each other, from the rising of the sun till the going down of the same; until the asthmatic lady, as might be expected, found herself breathless, and on the point of yielding the last word. Taking advantage, however, of her sister's infirmity of vision, she dressed up a figure in her own clothes, and placing it in her tower window, retreated to her boat, to recruit her forces in the cool air of Lough Corrib. The myopic lady meantime, perceiving the window occupied, continued her diapason of invective, and receiving no answer, was only more irritated and inflamed by the implied contempt. The conclusion was inevitable. Death alone could put an end to such an unequal combat; and the lady of *Cushlanne-na-Haliah*, was found, one fine morning, lifeless in her "bower window."

to do likewise, Lord Arranmore; and will engage that if you put yourself at the head of the Bog Moys and Ballyslatterys, and joins Martin's Connemaras and Daly's Dunsandals, yez will keep the county in your own hands, and sit, plaze God, for St Grellan in the parliament yet."

With this prophecy, echoed by Miss Monica's „I'll ingage, troth, will ye," the ladies of Bog Moy descended the broken steps of the Brigadier's tower; continuing to amuse their nephew with various details of the insolent airs of the party of Beauregard, on the occasion of their last visit to the country: and ended, as they entered the dining-room, with the expressed hope that it would be long before they paid another — a prayer in which Lord Arranmore most devoutly joined.

CHAPTER II.

THE JUG DAY.

Our country's honour roofed.

SHAKESPEARE.

THE flanking turret of the bawn of Bog Moy, distinguished as the Brigadier's tower, had obtained that name in consequence of the siege which the Brigadier Flavius Mac Taaf had maintained against a host of creditors: and the Brigadier might have long retained possession of a place, within whose precincts the „kings writ could not run,” had he not been compelled to surrender, on the summons of an apoplexy. Since his death the fortress had remained unoccupied, except by an old overseer, whose recent demise had again left it untenanted. Though abandoned to neglect, its massive walls (eight feet in thickness) had preserved it dry: and when the swallows' nests were destroyed, „the place readied up,” and a few such articles of furniture conveyed to it, as might be spared from the not very abundant *garde-meuble* of Bog Moy House: and when a huge turf fire blazed on its spacious ungrated hearth (necessary even in July), it was, if not

comfortable, habitable. Beneath its roof, its new tenant might at least hope for that silence and solitude which would stand in the place of other enjoyments, and to pursue his studies uninterrupted by the dictation of his aunts, the endless gossip of the widow, Miss Costello, and father Festus, or by the probable descent of the Os and Macs, tribes and half-tribes, who from the boasts of the Misses Mac Taaf, he concluded would drop in, in their passage from the interior to St Grellan, with the good intent of bestowing all their tediousness upon the inmates of the mansion.

In such a tower, in such a spot, surrounded by bogs and morasses, the most elegant dramatic writer of his day produced one of the most charming and classical comedies in the English language.* Whatever gives concentration to genius, and excludes the distraction of external objects, is favourable to its labours. Some few writers, indeed, have thrown off their happiest productions amidst the bustle of business, or the excitements of pleasure, — as the deaf are said to hear best during the rolling of a drum. But, though Shakspeare may have written amidst the distraction of the green-room, and Farquhar composed in the

* Cumberland wrote his "West Indian" in an old turret in his father's episcopal residence in Ireland. See his Memoirs.

confusion of a country inn, still the activity of the senses, is, generally speaking, but little compatible with energy of intellect.

Rude as was this ruinous retreat, still here he had hoped to woo and win back that mood of mind which the unmeaning common-places and illiterate garrulity of the inmates of Bog Moy had effectually put to flight. But the woods of Beauregard, seen faintly, as they were, in the remote distance, kept up a feverish recollection of scenes and persons, which assumed a brighter and more attractive aspect, from their contrast with his present isolated and coarse mode of existence. The intellectual intercourse of the Historical Society; the military festivities of the Dublin Volunteers; his adventures at the castle, and at Knocklofty House, the Sybil mask, too, all arose in rapid association; but he endeavoured to forget all,

E'en as a flattering dream of worthless fancy:
to think, as thought might be most profitable to himself and others, and to pour the whole force of his mind upon such subjects of literary and national interest, as might serve the great cause to which he had devoted himself from sentiment, before principle had suggested its adoption as a duty.

A few days' residence at Bog Moy, however, convinced him, that there he could not long

remain; that a dependence the most insupportable must be the inevitable purchase of a residence, in no instance attractive — a dependence, whose irksomeness could not long be relieved by the laughable absurdities, which at first had turned disgust into amusement. Perpetually urged to be useful, though rarely permitted to be so — condemned to listless inactivity, yet denied the repose of leisure; exciting jealousy by his interference, and resentment by his neglect; he lived under the perpetual infliction of the vigilance and dictation of both his aunts. Even this childish subjection, to which they sought to reduce him, was scarcely more annoying, than the penalty imposed on his patience and taste, by the dull, monotonous details of their endless *commérage*. With views as narrow as their sphere of action, and with a sharpness of temperament, concentrated in their own little interests, their eternal expression of their petty grievances and fancied injuries was humorously contrasted with the remote obscurity of their lives and position. Impressed with the highest sense of their own consequence, full of contempt for all that was not of their own caste, class, and sphere, they were yet jealous at the fancied neglect, even of those on whom they looked down; and perpetually at variance with each other, they were only united in an endless endeavour to repel fancied aggression, and

mutually to support their own very questionable personal importance. Such as they were, the *Ban Tiernas*, or fair chieftains of Bog Moy, were strong, but not rare illustrations of the fallacy of those theories, which give to the world every vice, and to solitude every virtue.

If retirement encourages those formal peculiarities which are at variance with the minor moralities of social intercourse, it is no less hostile to the development of regulated benevolence; which alone springs from an enlarged and practical philanthropy. In solitude the heart narrows, the feelings of personality acquire preponderance; and self, magnified by the remoteness of other objects of comparison or affection, becomes the exclusive principle of existence.

All these foibles of temper, temperament, and position, came out daily and momentarily in the Miss Mac Taafs, after the flush of their first pleasurable excitement, occasioned by their nephew's arrival, had subsided. Isolated by their topographical situation (for Bog Moy, when the tide was out, was only accessible by a bridle way), their only habitual visitants were the widow and Miss Costello, and their director; the two former repaying the hospitality of their comparatively wealthy friends, by feeding their peccant humours with the local scandal of St Grellan; and the latter (as far removed from the cultivation and refinement

of his predecessor, the Abbé O'Flaherty, as from the bigotry and zeal of the Abbate O'Brien), was neither of an age, nor of habits to render his society more than endurable, to one who had all the fastidious intolerance of youth, which time and experience eventually breaks down to universal indulgence. With the numerous cousins, friends, and followers, „kith, kin, and relations” of whom Miss Mac Taaf had spoken, he perceived they held but little communication. The distance of their residences was considerable; the ways impassable; and the habits of his aunts home-bred and indolent. Nothing therefore less than some great family festival, like the Jug Day, sufficed to draw together the representatives of the ancient chiefs of Connemara and Jar Connaught from their nooks in the mountains, or their courts and castles „on the other side of Galway town.”

By the great protestant authorities, the Hunkses, the Proudforts, and their dependants, the Miss Mac Taafs were looked upon, like other very old protestant families, as half papists and whole Jacobites (a race in those remote regions, even then not quite extinct); their old fashion, manners, and habits, and above all, their having neither carriage nor horses, were likewise impediments to a social intercourse in that quarter: though it was always „in their contemplation” to remedy

the last objection, when they could „ready up the family coach,” which mouldered under a shed in the bawn; and when James Kelly could get time to look after the two long tailed greys, „the only bastes with which they could drive into St Grellan town, after the Mac Taaf fashion, as introduced by Lady Betty Burke.”

Lord Arranmore thus living in utter isolation, without either the enjoyments of solitude or the distractions of society, had no opportunity for sounding the political feelings of the country; and he looked forward to the Jug Day, no less as an occasion for acquiring information for the society of the Union in Dublin, than as relief from the tedious sameness of his present existence. Meantime letters from Lord Walter cheered him, by accounts of the success of his pamphlet; a success, however, which threatened to draw down on its author the vengeance of the party against which it was directed.

The *last of the* old pack of cards had now been sent out by „Paddy the post,” and distributed through the country; and Lord Arranmore counted upon a general gathering of the clans: but where the numerous guests were to be stowed (even with the aid of the priest’s house, which the Miss Mac Taafs had put into requisition), he had not the least idea.

In about three weeks after the arrival of

the future lord of Bog Moy, the long expected, long contemplated Jug Day arrived. But no vulgar bustle, no flutter of hope or fear, no vague apprehension of who would, or would not accept the invitation, disturbed the habitual stateliness of the Miss Mac Taafs. Nothing of that horrible anxiety which clouds the gaieties of the demi-ton of more refined society, lest the great should stay away, and the little come, ruffled their equanimity. Each lady, sailing about with her hands dropped into the depths of her capacious pockets, gave orders for certain „cuttings and cosherings” on the county, which were always exacted upon such occasions. Tributary poultry, and tributary fish, came teeming in from tenants on sea and land, in kreels and kishes, with guizzard-trout from lough Corrib, butcher’s meat from St Grellan, and whiskey from every still in the Barony. Linen was drawn forth from chests and coffers, which, for colour and antiquity, resembled the „*linge de Sarbonne*” quoted by Menage: and moulds were prepared by the indefatigable Grannie-ny-Joyce, which might have come within the meaning of the bye-laws of the town, directed against „candelles which give ne light ne sight.”

Cadgers came crowding to the back way, and beggars to the bawn. Pipers and harpers assembled from all parts: and the pipe of claret,

in honour of which the feast was given, and which occupied the withdrawing-room, that had long served the purposes of a cellar, was crowned with green branches, and raised on a lofty bier within view of the guests: the silver tankard of the Brigadier was placed beside it.

„As „the Jug Day” intimated an invitation of twenty-four hours, at least, no particular time was fixed upon for the dinner: and the guests, well aware that they could not come too early nor remain too late, poured in, as their own convenience, distance of residence, or previous occupations dictated. Two state-ly old coaches and four, with a chaise-marine and chariot, came by the coast-road, the „tide being out;” guests from the coast, dependant on high water, sailed at an earlier hour into the creek of Bog Moy, from the seats on Killery Bay, and the headlands of Achille. The greater number, male and female, rode single or double over moor and mountain, „the bog being dry,” — an event on which much of the hospitable intercourse of the Barony depended, and which was frequently announced in the invitation, to insure its acceptance.

It was in vain that the ladies of the feast endeavoured to press their refractory, and now most unpopular nephew, into the service of the day; that a spigot was conveyed to his keeping for tapping the pipe, and filling the

„first jug;” that he was ordered to help Father Festus in making and mixing the punch (an operation performed with a certain hocus-pocus air, peculiar to the genuine parish priest of the second or third class); it was in vain that he was requested to have „an eye about the place;” and see that when the stables were full, the bastes should be turned into the paddock, and plenty of hay thrown down for them. With „an eye” only to his own sense of personal dignity, he had made a sudden retreat from spigot and tankard, from pipe and punch; and having passed the early part of the day among the rocks of the sea shore, with Polybius in his hand, and a dreadful anticipation of the bore of the coming evening in his head, he returned only in time to dress for dinner. Bolted in his tower by the very bar which had excluded the Brigadier’s invading creditors, he beheld from his loop-hole, the gradual *coming in* of the „mere Irish,” as they descended from brake or hill on saddle or pillion, or were jolted along the rutted road to the bawn, on low-backed cars,* or carriages.

* A low-backed car is the common vehicle used for the purposes of husbandry. It has no springs, and moves on wheels made of solid pieces of wood. Upon such occasions as the present, a feather bed and counterpane were formerly spread over the car, for the double purpose of state and ease; and the author has seen as much beauty, and almost as

The women, who came on horse-back, he observed were nearly all cloathed in the same singular costume; viz., enormous full-plaited cloth skirts, capotes, and calashes; and neither valise nor saddle-bag gave note of preparation for a more splendid or elegant toilette.

Meantime, the boy about the place, the *girleen baun*, and as many other boys and girls as the exigencies of the day had pressed into the *valétaille* of Bog Moy, had been sent to seek out him, in whose honour the feast was principally given. Unable therefore to defer any longer his appearance, Lord Arranmore sallied forth to encounter annoyances, in part made up of his own fastidiousness, and of that over-refinement of taste, which youth so often affects, even to itself.

„As the fallen roof of „th' ould withdrawing-room” had not been restored, — as the floor of the new withdrawing-room (now the cellar), had never been laid down, — as the dining-room was strictly appropriated on the Jug day to its proper purpose, and was scaffolded round with tables somewhat precariously, but rather picturesquely placed, in what Miss Mac Taaf called „horse-shoe fashion,”—

much diamonds, thus transported to the seat of rural festivity, as she ever beheld gracing the dinners of the British metropolis.

the best bed-room, which opened into the dining-room, was constituted a *salon de reception* for the time being, — an expedient often resorted to in the remote parts of Ireland, in days not very long gone by. As this room, which was literally on a ground-floor, was rarely inhabited, its damp and fusty atmosphere required a fire to render it endurable, even in summer: and the swallows of Bog Moy, not contented with the chimnies of the Brigadier's tower, had made so considerable a lodgement in that of the room in question, that more smoke was sent back than emitted through its channel.

When, therefore, Lord Arranmore opened the door, on making his first appearance, a sudden gush of smoke rushed down into the chamber and scattered the ashes in such dark thick clouds, that he could see nothing distinctly, but that the room was crowded to suffocation.

„Weary on the smoke,” said Miss Mac Taaf, making a motion with one hand to waft aside its vapours, and holding out the other to her nephew to lead him forward, and present him in form to the company. While struggling with her temper, she muttered in his ear, „This is pretty behaviour, Murrough O'Brien; — and the party made on purpose to introduce you to the ould families. Well, never mind now, but *foghal foh*, as your father used to say.”

Then stepping forward majestically, she presented „her nephew, Lord Arranmore,” separately to each guest, male and female, to the third and fourth generation; evidently vain of the high-sounding title and splendid personal appearance of the young relation, for whom she was reserving such a lecture, as she conceived his dependence, and her own authority over him, entitled her to pronounce.

One „dissonant consonant” name followed another, with genealogical illustrations as unpronounceable as those of the Hebrews; and cousinships, twenty times removed, were claimed and acknowledged, till Lord Arranmore (wearied and annoyed beyond all measure, at the awkwardness and formality of the ceremony, which seemed to have no end), took refuge behind one of the massive head columns of „the best bed,” upon which several ladies were seated, chatting and laughing with the most perfect ease and frankness, neither silenced nor interrupted by the approach of the noble stranger. Every seat in the room, indeed, was occupied by the female guests, while the men stood in groups in the centre and near the door, with all the propriety of separation observed in a cathedral. All, however, talked gaily and unreservedly: no rustic bashfulness, none of the awkward reserve and vulgar timidity usually observable in provincial society, embarrassed the conversation.

Sheep and justices, grand juries and road-jobbings, the usual conversational resources of country gentlemen, were indeed amply discussed; but good stories, and bon-mots, and sallies of humour, were plentifully poured forth to enliven the mere details of country and local topics.

As the smoke passed off, and the atmosphere cleared up, Lord Arranmore observed with surprise that there was present, not only more personal beauty than he had ever seen assembled in so limited a circle, but that even a considerable elegance and sumptuousness of dress distinguished the female part of the company. The slough of over-all cloth petticoats and capots having been cast off in the hall, a display of French silks, and point lace, of fashions from Bordeaux, and flowers from Oporto, was exhibited, which might have put the *petites maîtresses* of the capital to the blush; and which proved that the intercourse kept up between the Connaught gentry and their exiled kindred and commercial correspondents on the Continent was even still in considerable activity. He was struck, too, by the general animation and *éveillé* look of all: every eye beamed life; every countenance was full of intelligence: and though the brogue of many was sufficiently obvious, and the prettiest lips made *weavers* rhyme to *savours meat*, to *fate*, and *mean to gain* (as Swift did, long after he had

associated with the Harleys and the Bolingbrokes), yet to voices as soft as the smiles that accompanied them, much might be forgiven on the score of mere pronunciation.

„Do you wish to sit down?“ asked a lady (herself seated on the bed, in the shade of its moth-eaten damask curtain), and she made a movement which seconded the invitation.

Lord Arranmore felt no very decided inclination to accept the proffered seat. The person who made the offer did not appear particularly attractive; partaking of none of the advantages of the toilette, which enhanced the charms of many of the younger members of the society. She was dressed soberly and dowdily, in a grey camlet habit, with a head-dress then worn in Ireland, called a *bonne grâce*, a sort of deep and simple bonnet, affected alike by the religious ladies and those of the better order of peasantry. To judge by a small gold cross, pendant from her bosom, she was evidently one of those lay nuns, whom the dissolution of convents, incidental to the French revolution, had driven home from the continent, to their friends in Ireland; or perhaps a *chanoinesse* of some of those foreign orders, to which such Irish catholic ladies as can claim admission by quarterings since the flood, are occasionally elected.

Dreading to encounter another devout Miss Costello, in the lady thus habited *en précieuse*,

Lord Arranmore hesitated to accept the proffered place, and bowed coldly.

„Oh, no ceremony,” she added carelessly, „there is room enough; and you may have some time to wait for dinner. In Connaught, as in France, '*ni les princesses*' (as Mademoiselle Montpensier tells us), '*ni les gens de la première qualité, n'ont point d'heure précise pour se mettre à table.*' Time belongs to another class of persons than princes or chiefs, Irish or French: so you had better sit down.”

Struck by a manner so off-handed, a tone so pleasant, and a voice so mellifluous, in spite of its brogue and foreign accent, Lord Arranmore took the seat which was offered him on the best bed, observing:

„Irish manners resemble the French in many respects.”

„Yes,” said the lady of the *bonne grâce*, „we have only to fancy this *la ruelle* (the object of ambition to the coteries of the Longuevilles and the Nemours of the past age, and of the Grammonts and Polignacs of the present), and the thing is as correct as possible: though in England it would *faire frémir* the least prudish. What revolutions, by the bye, in church and state, has not the *ruelle* effected — what leagues and frondes.”

„Wherever woman presides,” said Lord Arranmore, amused and surprised by a style of conversation so unexpected in such a place,

„there must be placed the focus of al power and influence. The most important events in the history of man are indeed referable to the *ruelle* and *boudoir*; which, after all, are the true counsel boards and star chambers, in which his destiny is decided.”

„Which only shows,” said the lady, „that man is governed by his passions and his vanity; for the agency of woman is rarely directed to any higher faculties or feelings.”

„I cannot exactly agree with you, Madam,” he replied warming in the conversation: „I believe there are women whose intellectual superiority gives them a higher vocation in society, and a more decided influence over its events, than even those personal charms, which, however irresistible, must still have the informing soul to give them their full effect.”

„*L'esprit de la plupart des femmes,*” said the lady, smiling, „*sert plus à fortifier leur folie que leur raison*; and I suspect a cunning woman will always have more influence than a clever one. Pray, who is that very pretty person, in the dirty lace and sparkling diamonds, who, like others of the belles present, reminds one of the heroines of the old romances, *'force pierreries, et point de linge blanc.*”

„I don't know in the least,” said Lord Arranmore, laughing. „I am almost a stranger here myself; and though my introduction was

sufficiently formal, it confused me so much that I have not retained a single name."

„Yes," said the *bonne grâce*, shrugging her shoulders, „I observe it; *quelle corvée!*"

„But who would not be '*corvéable et taillable à merci et miséricorde*,' if the reward were to be the place I now occupy," replied Lord Arranmore, with warmth and with a gallantry as sincere as it was graceful. For though he could not very well discover the age or figure of his muffled interlocutor, he was charmed with an intelligence, a frankness, an indescribable something, which lurked in certain tones and modulations of her voice, that attracted perhaps by their adaption to the peculiar taste of the hearer.

„I do not think, however," said the lady, evading the compliment, „that *my* name was inflicted upon you: the fact is, I was not on the muster roll of the Jug Day: I have only stepped in, like many others, in the tail of my sept; and have not yet been presented myself to the ladies of Bog Moy: for I got at once hitched here, out of the line of fire — and smoke too!"

„My aunts cannot fail to be delighted with the presentation of such a guest," said Lord Arranmore; „will you allow me the honour?" and half rose.

„No, no," said the lady, eagerly, „I am only worthy to be confounded with the crowd:

besides I am altogether *déplacée* here: my calling is not to feasts, but to fasts," (and she looked at her cross), „and my name has long ceased to be popular at Bog Moy."

„Good heavens! what is in a name?" demanded O'Brien, warmly, and still more fascinated; but vainly endeavouring to get a view of the face of the speaker.

„Every thing in Connaught," replied the *bonne grâce*; „it is the sign of feuds and alliances, of hatreds and of loves, of ancient inheritances and recent usurpations. What an abridgment of the history of the land, for instance, is the story of the 'O'Briens and the O'Flahertys,' names that to Irish ears speak volumes?"

„Yes," said O'Brien, startled at the observation: „their local ambition and private passions, concentrated as they were upon this petty sphere of action, were an epitome of all that has shaken the world, under the high sounding names of the Cæsars and the Alexanders."

„Exactly," said the *bonne grâce*. „I remember hearing in my infancy from my foster-mother, the story of my celebrated ancestors, Murrough O'Brien, and the Abbess of Moycul-len."

„Were they *your* ancestors?" demanded Lord Arranmore, in some emotion. „May I beg to know the name of the person I have the honour of addressing?"

„Beavoin O'Flaherty," was the reply.

O'Brien started on his legs: the lady rose too, glided away, and piercing into the laughing, talking group, which had gathered round the open door, as if to recognize some acquaintance, was merged in the crowd. At that moment James Kelly, in a most stentorian voice, announced that „the dinner was dished." Miss Mac Taaf, now sailing up to her nephew, seized his hand, and leading him to a venerable looking old lady, in a flowered sack and velvet hood, exclaimed, „Lord Arranmore, lade out Lady O'Flaherty, of Limon field, who I believe now that the Moycullens are not to the fore, is the greatest lady in the county; for" (she added, addressing an elderly gentleman) „though I know you Burkes and De Burgos have the true Norman blood in your veins, and an English earldom, and an Irish marquise in your family since the invasion, yet it's a rule in Bog Moy, that the Milesians ever take the wall of the Strongbownians; and no disrespect meant neither to the English by descent, nor to the thirteen tribes, no, nor the half tribes; since all here, are gentry bred and born; and not a Cromwellian, nor a Williamite in the whole party, I'll engage."

This exordium being pronounced, and followed by a general applause, O'Brien was permitted to lead out the Dowager Lady O'Flaherty — one of those noble representatives

of Irish beauty, and of Irish gentility, who, down to the close of the last century, were to be found in the remote provinces of Ireland; and who in their courtly manners and stately habits, preserved the dignified graces of the Irish court of those days, when the Ormondes and Tyrconnells presided over its almost regal drawing-rooms. Supported by a high gold-headed cane, on one side, and on the other by the arm of Lord Arranmore, this venerable subject of many of Carolan's inspirations, moved slowly on, followed by the O'Maillies of Achille and Clare Island, the Joyces of Joyce's country, and others of the great aboriginal families of Connemara and Mayo. Then came the Darcys, the Dalys, the Skirrets, and the Frenches, with the Burkes, Blakes, Bells, and Bodkins, and all that filled up the list of tribes of Galway of those who could and those who could not claim cousinship.* The protestant clergyman of the parish of Bog Moy (a parish without a congregation), bowed out Father Festus, the priest of a congregation without a church, and the provost of St Grellan gave the *pas* to the Mayor of Galway.

* The feuds of the *Bianchi* and *Neri* of Florence were poor and cold types of the dissensions which long distracted the town of Galway concerning the right to "call cousin:" a right claimed by the half tribes, and refused to them by the whole.

Sixty persons to be seated, where there was not comfortable accommodation for half the number, required no little pains and ingenuity: and the horse-shoe table would have been very inadequate to the wants of the guests, but for the never failing aid of the side-board, side-tables, and window-stools, which with a „plate on the knee,” and a „bit in the corner,” at last provided for all. After much crushing, squeezing, and laughing (all in the most perfect good humour and courtesy), the whole company were finally seated. Lord Arranmore at the head of the centre table, between his elder aunt, and the Dowager Lady O'Flaherty, presided as the representative of the late Brigadier; while Miss Mable, supported by a Joyce, and a Blake, did the honours at the further extremity.

Grace being said by the minister of the established church (while the Roman catholic guests cast down their eyes, moved their lips, and crossed themselves under the table-cloth, with a bashful and proscribed look), — Miss Mac'Taaf stood up, and with a cordial welcome in her eye, said aloud, „Much good may it do ye all;” to which all bowed their heads. A rush of attendants, of all sorts and sizes, ages and ranks, including the servants of the guests, liveried and unliveried, — and the striking up of the pipes and harp (the performers being ceremoniously seated at a table

on which wine and glasses were placed), on the outside of the door, announced that the „hour of attack” had arrived; and never did a more hospitable board offer to appetites, sharpened by sea and mountain air, a more abundant feast. No expected *relevé* (except such as were necessary to supply the place of the vanished contents of some favourite dish), kept the appetites of *gustateurs* in suspense. Rounds of beef were the *pièces de resistance*, which none resisted. Haunches of venison and legs of mutton were *entrées* and *entremets*, that required no substitution. Pastry and poultry formed the *hors d'œuvres*; and a *dormant* of a creel of potatoes and a bowl of fresh butter left no wish for more brilliant or less substantial fare: while a vacant place was left for the soup, which was always served last. Jorums of punch were stationed round the capacious hearth; port and sherry were ranged along the tables; and the door opening into the withdrawing-room, disclosed to view the cask of claret, the idol, to which such sacrifices were to be made, on altars so well attended and so devoutly served. The Brigadier's tankard, brightened for the occasion, by James Kelly, was now filled to the brim with „the regal, purple stream” and placed before Lord Arranmore; and before the palate was plunted by the coarser contact of port or punch, the new tap was tasted. The flavour,

body, and odour, were universally approved in terms worthy of the *convives du grand De La Reynière*; and it required no skill in augury to divine, that the claret would be out, before the company.

All were now occupied with eating, drinking, talking, laughing, helping and being helped; while old fashioned breeding disposed every guest to be cordially at the service of his neighbour: — „Allow me to trouble you for a slice of your round, rather rare;”* was answered by, „Sir, the trouble’s a pleasure.” „Give me leave to call on you for a cut of your haunch, when you are at leisure,” was replied to affirmatively, with „the honour of a glass of wine;” and a cross fire of „Miss Joyce, shall we make up that little quarrel we had? — „Port, if you please, Sir” — „Hand me the tankard” — „James Kelly, tell Miss Prudence Costello, I shall be happy to hob-and-nob with her, if she is not better engaged,” etc. etc., continued without intermission; and exhibited a courtesy, which not long ago prevailed in the highest circles; — a courtesy which, however quaintly expressed, was well worth the cold and formal reserve of what is now considered refinement, in the school of modern egotism.

Meantime, Lord Arranmore; prompted by his aunt, and nudged by James Kelly „to press

* Anglicé „raw.”

V. *Lady Morgan.* IV.

the bashful stranger to his food, did the honours to a circle, in which bashfulness was certainly not a distinguishing characteristic. His situation was irksome, in proportion as his thoughts diverged from the mensal duties imposed upon him, in search of the *bonne grâce*, which had hidden from his eyes a face, that he was most anxious to behold. There was something in the voice, as well as the words, of this anomalous visitant at Bog Moy (even before she had announced a name having a poetical and fanciful interest in his imagination), which pre-occupied him, and which had even struck him forcibly, as not new to his ear. What a style of conversation, too! after the tedious prosing of Widow Costello, Father Festus, and the Miss Mac Taafs; what a transient restoration to the world of intellect! He looked down either side of the horse-shoe table, in vain. On either side, indeed, bright eyes, that seemed lying in wait for his sparkled to his inquiring glance: for many of the fair Os and Macs had „*données dans la seigneurie, à bride abattue*;" and mistaking his scrutinizing glance, they replied by a nod of assent, that engaged him in a keen encounter of „wine and smiles" for which he was utterly unprepared.

At last, however, he discovered the object of his search at a side-table at the lower end of the room. She was seated in profile, in leaning on her elbow and playing with her

fork, in apparent attention to Father Festus; who, never more in his vocation than when presiding over the rites of hospitality, was keeping his „table in a roar.” Lord Arranmore from that moment was wholly engrossed by the only person who had an interest for him, and he was about to send James Kelly to request permission to take wine with her, when Miss Monica Mac Taaf (who, by her position at the foot of the table, commanded a view of the bawn through the open windows), exclaimed, with intense amazement — „The Lord bless us! who can this be! a coach and four, and a great party of horsemen and military officers?”

Miss Mac Taaf turned round her head, asking, „Is it the Walscourt livery?”

„No; it looks like the Browns of the Neale, or of Castle Mac Garret,” said old Mr Joyce.

„Why, then, upon my honour and credit,” said Miss Mac Taaf, rising and approaching the window, with the leg of a duck in her hand, and a napkin pinned over the breast of her *corbeau* (as she called her raven habit, or dress of ceremony), „if it isn't the Knocklofty coach; and didn't know they were in the country, and thinks they might have waited till they were called on, any how. Jeemes Kelly, man, run to the door.”

„To come at his hour, too!” said Lady O'Flaherty; „though that is just like them: their last morning visit to Lemon Field was

paid, as Sir John and myself had sat down to cribbage, after tea."

"Why, then, come when they might," said Mr Blake, "they could never take a happier moment to see Bog Moy in all its glory. It will give them an idea of country Galway hospitality, they have as yet shown little inclination to follow themselves; so I hope you'll admit them, Miss Mac Taaf?"

A similar thought had crossed Miss Mac Taaf herself. Not

At the royal feast for Persia won,
By Philip's godlike son,

did Philip's "godlike son" himself look upon "his valiant peers around," with more pride and triumph, than Miss Mac Taaf surveyed her horse-shoe table, occupied by the members of the oldest steps and tribes in the province: and being secretly flattered with this first visit from Lady Knocklofty, she turned to the company and observed.

"It shall never be said the door of Bog Moy was closed at maile times to friend or foe; so I'll go and recaive them, and ask them to take pot-luck, if no body has any objection."

A general consent was announced; and Miss Mac Taaf, wholly preoccupied, and unconscious of the duck's leg in her hand, or the napkin on the breast of her *corbeau*, sallied forth to the hall door, to which a *vis-à-vis* had drawn up,

driven four-in-hand by Lord Charles Fitzcharles, and followed by a young lady on horse-back, and some gentlemen in military uniforms.

Several of the male guests had also risen from table, and accompanied Miss Mac Taaf to the door, which was so close to the dining-room window as to give to all within the full benefit of what was passing; and all eyes and all ears were now directed to the same point.

„My dear Miss Mac Taaf,” said Lady Knocklofty, alighting, followed by Lady Honoria Stratton (while Miss Macguire, assisted from her horse by captain O’Mealy, the general of the district, and his aide-de-camp, joined them)—
„My dear Miss Mac Taaf, I have a thousand apologies to make, in the first place, for not acknowledging your hospitable invitation, which I only received yesterday, on my return from Lord Altamont’s (where I have left Lord Knocklofty in attendance on his Excellency the Duke), and, in the next, for having kept you waiting dinner till such an unconscionable hour, as I fear we have done.”

„My invitation! — Kept *me* waiting! — the Lord save us!” exclaimed Miss Mac Taaf, raising her eyes, and the hand with the duck’s leg; while the other was shaken by the great lady, with true electioneering cordiality.

„It was all Lord Charles’s fault,” said Lady

Honoraria; while both ladies, with much difficulty, kept their countenances.

„But, pray,” said Lady Knocklofty, „do not let us detain you from your guests. We will follow you to the dining-room. I hope you will excuse our *demi-toilette*. You see, Miss Mac Taaf, I have taken you at your word, and brought the party at Beauregard, as you desired.”

„As *I* desired?” repeated Miss Mac Taaf, in utter confusion of ideas, and still standing in motionless surprise.

„Miss Mac Taaf,” said Lady Knocklofty, introducing her suite, „Major O’Mealy, General Egerton;—Lord Charles, come down off the box, and give the horses to the grooms;—Lord Charles Fitzcharles, Captain Horace Montagu, A. D. C. Miss Maguire and Lady Honoraria you know, I believe, already.”

Miss Mac Taaf was now utterly confounded; she endeavoured, but in vain, to recover her thoughts and stateliness; and to make a courtesy, that should express her possession of both: for no French ultra of the old regime was ever more anxious to „*représenter noblement et avec dignité*,” than the chieftainess of Bog Moy.

„You cannot have mistaken the day,” said Lady Honoraria. „Miss Mac Taaf looks as if she scarcely expected you?”

„I hope not. I am sure I have not,” said Lady Knocklofty; „but I have the card with

me;" and she shook a card from her scented handkerchief, as if its touch would have been contamination. „There it is," she said; „some one pick it up."

The only „one" who had presence of mind to do so, was James Kelly, who, standing at his mistress's elbow with a plate in his hand, exclaimed.

„It's the ould knave of clubs, shure enough, Miss Mac Taaf: I'd know his ugly face any where, in regard of having dropped in into the dripping-pan; and there's the mark to this day."

A general titter among the great party followed the observation; and young Counsellor Lynch, whose modesty seldom lay in the way of his advancement, joined the laugh, with an intelligent look of mutual understanding with the Knocklofty party, and read the card aloud.

„The Miss Mac Taafs (Mable and Monica) present regards, and request the pleasure of the Earl and Countess Knocklofty, and the party at Beauregard's, company to a Jug Day at Bog Moy, Tuesday, July 20. — N. B. Beds for the ladies, and a shake down for the gentlemen, if wanted."

„Well," said Miss Mac Taaf, recovering from her confusion, and with all the ancient hospitality of the sept, and all the natural courtesy of an old Irish gentlewoman, „well

I know neither act nor part of that card, though it shurely is a card of th' ould pack, if not my writing; and, I suppose, it's some of the St Grellan humbugging; but any how, Lady Knocklofty, I am happy to have the honour of seeing you and your's at Bog Moy; and if you will take pot-luck, you will find a hearty welcome, and good cheer left to the fore; — to say nothing of the best blood in the country assembled to recaive you."

Without further ceremony, Lady Knocklofty and her party accepted the invitation; and she expressed her anger at the liberty taken with her with such a smile as, to an attentive observer, would have betrayed the secret of the hoax, and placed it to the account of its true authors.

Miss Mac Taaf, with her head on high, stately and stern, led the way, followed by the three dames of quality, Lord Charles, General Egerton, the Aide-de-Camp, and O'Mealy. The latter personage had been appointed to the office of Brigade Major of St Grellan by Lord Knocklofty, on the disbanding of the Royal Irish—broken (as it had been raised), to answer some private interest of the founder. Nothing under the effrontery of the dashing party, which now entered the dining-room, primed for fun and ready for frolic, could have withstood the awkward formality of the introduction; as Miss Mac Taaf presented each, „according to the

scrip," to the heads of all the families present, who all rose. When the ceremony was over, the new party took their places; for although it might have puzzled the most accurate calculator of *âmes et demi-âmes*, where to place an additional number of guests, the board of Bog Moy seemed to afford a general accommodation to all consigned to it, and in a few minutes the new comers were seated at the upper end of the table.

With that charming courtesy, which distinguishes Connaught manners, and which springs from kindly feelings, and a deep reverence for all the rites of hospitality, those who had previously occupied the first seats had risen, and resigned their places to the Knocklofty party, shifting for themselves as they might. „Clane plates" were called for by Miss Mac Taaf, with an order for fresh relays of dishes, reechoed by James Kelly at the sideboard, and reiterated from servant to servant, to the remotest confines of the kitchen. Old Mr Joyce called on Lord Charles to take wine; Counsellor Lynch begged to be allowed that honour with Lady Knocklofty; and a general challenge following, the new arrivals were welcomed with such claret as Lord Charles and the General declared they had never before tasted.

Meantime the bright eyes of the three great ladies, assisted by their glasses, were turned with much curiosity and amusement on the company.

„Well,” said Miss Mac Taaf, „I am hoighly dełoighted to have an opportunity of showing your ladyship the ra'al rank and beauty of the country. For though this is not a pleasure I ever dramed of, and though there has long been a trifling difference between your family and ours, yet if ye had found the door of Bog Moy shut agen you at dinner time, you would have done well, to serve the Mac Taafs, as Granuaile served the Howths.”

„And how was that, my dear Miss Mac Taaf?” said Lady Knocklofty, leaving untouched the pile of venison that smoked before her, and taking a survey of the table, through her glass.

„Why, my lady, she carried off the heir of the family; which is what I should be very sorry you would do with our heir; and I beg to present to your Ladyship, my nephew Lord—Jasus, what's gone with Murrogh?”

„Murrogh” had in the first incursion of the grandees into the dining room, availed himself of the rising *en masse* to escape from his durance at the head of the table: and hoping to evade observation, by confounding himself with a group of young men, who crowded round a side table, till he could find a moment for complete eclipse, he was on the point of darting forth, and flying he knew not, cared not whither, when his aunt's speech directed every eye to his person, and arrested his

flight. At that moment, a low voice close to his ear, muttered „*fais ce que dois, arrive que pourra*:” the counsel acted like magic: he instantly returned to his place, and his aunt presented him to Lady Knocklofty, saying— „This is the heir I alluded to; and you see, your Ladyship might do worse than follow Grace O'Mailly's example. Lord Arranmore, my dear, this is the Countess Knocklofty — Lady Honora Stratton — Miss Macguire — and as to the gentlemen I'll have them till after dinner.”

Lord Arranmore, struggling against the most painful confusion, still mastered his emotions, to his uttermost power of self-controul; and with all the ease he could command, bowed to the parties presented to him. A movement of something like recognition, with evident surprise, was made in return. Lady Knocklofty inclined her head coldly, and blushed deeply through her rouge; and Lord Charles, with a sort of shy cordiality, acknowledged the acquaintance; while O'Mealy, an ape in all things, went no further than the courtesy of his principal led him.

Lady Honoria, the first to recover from the unexpectedness of his *rencontre*, and anxious to divert the attention of the company from the too evident confusion of her friend, now drew out Miss Mac Taafs (who in the mean time presented her sister at the foot of „the horse

shoe," as the co-heiress of the estate of Bog Moy, and the lordship of Ballyslattery, now in abeyance). Sending away her plate of „boiled duck, smothered in onions," and calling for soup, Lady Honoria put up her glass to the black, grim pictures over the chimney piece, and asked „Are those family pictures, Miss Mac Taaf? They are very well done."

„They are," said Miss Mac Taaf. „The cintre, Lady Honora, is the portraiture of the courageous Colonel Columb Mac Taaf, who defated Colonel Ingoldesby at the pass of Cong, — — Jeemes Kelly, is it on the Persia carpet ye lave them dishes? what are the cheers for, man?" — (James Kelly in vain sought a vacant chair for the dish he was replacing with a tureen of soup) — „which Colonel Ingoldesby was an upstart of Cromwell's, of whom the story runs, that the first of the Hunkses that ever showed his face in Connaught was his foot-boy."

„I declare," said Miss Macguire, „I took that for a picture of King William; the nose is so like."

„It is the Mac Taaf nose, Miss Macguire," said Miss Mac Taaf: „who carried their noses, and their heads too, as high as any Williamite in the land. If you look at my nephew there, you'll see he is the very moral of Colonel Columb. The nose in particular, as the verse runs,

Whoever the comeliest beauty would spy,
See the nose of the Taafs, and th' O'Brien's
bright eye.

Nobody would mistake him. He has thim both, we flatter ourselves, so hold up y' head, choild, there's mony bid for ye."

Every eye-glass was now alternately directed to the picture of Sir Columb, and to his descendant; and every lip was curled with a suppressed smile.

„And pray," said Lady Honoria, puckering up her mouth, „who is the lady with a cat under her arm, and a piece of gingerbread in her hand?"

„The cat happens to be an Italian greyhound, Lady Honora, and the piece of gingerbread is the—bible," said Miss Mac Taaf, drawing up. „The lady is our great great grandmother, Lady Mac Taaf; an English lady, and daughter of Sir Roger Gammon, who came over to Ireland, as Escheator of Connaught. Through his pious efforts, and the grace of God, the Mac Taafs embraced the reformed religion. It was on occasion of this alliance with the Gammons, that we first quartered the boar in the family arms."

„And the *bore*, I suppose, has remained in the family ever since?" said Lady Honoria, gravely.

„Ever since, Lady Honora," said Miss Mac Taaf, as gravely. „But, Lord save us, what's

gone with the goose?" an interrogation to which none could reply, until a certain gnawing noise under the table announced that Paddy Whack had availed himself of Miss Mac Taaf's preoccupation, and was doing those honours by the Solan goose, which she had neglected.

„Well, it does not signify, Jeemes Kelly," exclaimed Miss Mac Taaf, much irritated, „I'll have that cur hanged up to-morrow, if I live — at all events, turned out of the place."

„If you turn him out, sister Mable," said Miss Monica, kindling, „you will turn me out too; for, love me, love my dog, that's my motto. And if Jeemes Kelly was minding what he was about, the goose would be still to the fore."

A sisterly storm was now evidently brewing; which was, however, averted by the interference of General Egerton, who alone kept his countenance with perfect good breeding, during the whole scene. He requested Miss Mac Taaf to take wine, passed fresh eulogiums on the claret, inquired the name of her wine merchant, and asked if Paddy Whack was an Irish wolf-dog, — a race of which he had heard and read so much.

„Is it he the hound," said Miss Mac Taaf, with much inveteracy, „he is a spalpeen of a cabin cur, Giniral, and as arrant a colley as ever caught a colt by the heels."

Miss Monica reddened, and was whispered by the widow Costello, „to keep quite before the company.”

„But if you wish to see a raal Irish wolf-dog,” continued her sister, „look behind you, Gineral, there is the portraiture of the famous *Sus an chios*,* and its celebrated lady.”

„Which is the lady?” asked Lady Honoria; „and which the wolf-dog?”

„Which you please, young gentleman,” whispered Miss Macguire, after the manner of the showman, while the courteous General, to cover the ridicule, put up his glass, and observed, „a very majestic looking person indeed. Pray who is she, Miss Mac Taaf?”

„That, Gineral, is our celebrated ancestress by the mother's side, Granuaile, or Grace O' Mailly, who kept the country round in awe and terror, and built the first tower in this pile, which came into our family by the marriage of her daughter by Richard Burke, her third husband, with Emunh Mac Taaf. She was the terror of the nation along the coasts, and moored her large vessels in Clare Island, and her small craft in *Carrig-na-Uile*. Allow me to help you, Gineral, to some drawn butter?”

The General, in accepting an offer which deluged his plate, observed, „I think I can perceive a very strong likeness between this eminent lady and yourself, Miss Mac Taaf.”

* Honeysuckle.

„So I am tould, Gineral,” said Miss Mac Taaf, much pleased; „and there are some think I've more of the O'Mailly, than the Mac Taaf.”

„Here is an O'Mealy, I can answer for it,” said Lady Honoria, „who would be flattered by the resemblance: I mean our friend the Major.”

Miss Mac Taaf turned her stag-like eyes on the Major, whose name she had not before caught: and the inspection was evidently in favour of its object; who pulled up his stock, and calling up one of his best looks, returned her glances with a smile of infinite insinuation.

The persons with whom O'Mealy was now engaged, produced a very different effect on his mind, from that which they had made on his party. His early impressions of the grandeur and consequence of the old families of Munster and Connaught (whose names were to him as those of the Guelfs and Ghibelines), were still fresh. He remembered the day, when to have been admitted into such a circle was beyond the reach of his hopes, as it had ever been the great object of his emulation. The plenteous board at which he was seated, and the quarters which Bog Moy might offer to the Brigade Major of St Grellan, when Beau-regard should be deserted, suggested the idea of securing the good graces of its stately mistress. When, therefore, Miss Mac Taaf,

pleased with his comely appearance, asked him, „And are you an O'Mailly, Meejor?” he replied, in a soft voice, „I have that honour and glory, Miss Mac Taaf.”

„And of which of the families?” asked the lady.

This was a puzzler.

„Of which of the families is it, Miss Mac Taaf?” reiterated the Major, evasively, pulling up his stock.

„Ay,” said Miss Mac Taaf, „are ye of the O'Maillys of Clare Island, of whom the story goes that they were the discindants of the Mermaids, whose beautiful singing is heard to this day off the Island? Or are ye of the O'Maillys, Lords of *Umhaille*, or the owl's country; called to this day *Bru na Umhaille*, or the race of the owls?”

„Oh!” said Lady Honoria, „that is not the genus in ornithology to which the Major belongs, though he may be a descendant of the Mermaids; for he certainly inherits their musical talents; of which, I am sure, he will be happy to give you a specimen, when the cloth is removed, Miss Mac Taaf.”

„We need not wait for that, Lady Honora,” said Miss Mac Taff, who was passionately fond of music, and thought it never could be ill-timed; and although the Major had scarcely swallowed his last morsel of venison, and washed it down with a glass of claret, she pro-

ceeded to ask him, „Might we take the liberty of troubling you, Meejor, for a song?”

The Major, always pleased to be called out, and now resolved on pushing his relationship with the heiress of Bog Moy, replied, „With the greatest pleasure, Madam. Have you any favourite air you would wish in preference?”

„Any thing Irish, Meejor,” replied Miss Mac Taaf. „May be you'd feavour us with 'Molly Astore.'”

„I am happy to have it in my power to obleege you, Miss Mac Taaf, and will give you the new words, as sung in the new opera at Lady Ely's private theyatricals.”

„Any words plazes you, must be plazing to me, Meejor. Mr Joyce, keep silence there, at the ind of the table.”

The stillness of the tomb instantly prevailed and every body looked as melancholy, as if about to descend into it; while the *Magnus Apollo* of the moment, canvassing the several tables with looks of conscious merit, and anticipated success, cleared his voice, took another glass of claret, pulled up his stock, fluttered out his whiskers, and running through a few modulations, at last began,—directing his looks, and the words of the song to the lady of Bog Moy.

Had I a heart for falsehood fram'd,
I ne'er could injure you;
For though your tongue no promise claim'd,
Your charms would make me true, etc. etc.

Applause, loud and long, followed this beautiful air; which being sung with true Irish pathos, and the finest possible voice, produced an enthusiastic effect upon organs, the most adapted to respond to such an influence. The tears had come into Miss Mac Taaf's eyes, as she listened; and wiping away the pearly brine, she said, „Cousin O'Mailly, I'll take a glass of wine with you, and to your health and song.“

„Cousin O'Mailly,“ delighted with the acknowledged relationship, accepted the challenge, with „the greatest of pleasure, Madam,“ and Miss Mac Taaf continued:—

„And now, Meejor, you have every right and title to call upon whom you please, till you rest yourself, before we ask you again; and there's Miss Prudence Costello, who has a sweet little pipe of her own, as any in the county; and will give us, 'Guardian Angels' without further pressing, I'll ingage.“

„Guardian Angels,“ were now called for by all; and Miss Prudence Costello, who was the most impudent looking person in the world, threw round her large swimming eyes, that seemed to roll *en coulisse*, and declared „that she could not attempt to sing after the Meejor.“ The Major, however, pressed, as majors will press; and after much pretty delay, and affected bashfulness, Miss Prudence promised to give „Guardian Angels,“ provided her sister, the widow, would join in and help her out. The

widow, whose voice and looks were any thing but recusant, sighed and hemmed: and then pitching her voice to her sister's, after reiterated cries of silence, both ladies started off in perfect unison. With eyes cast down, and bosoms heaving, and looks of gentle sentimental martyrdom stamped on their broad, comely countenances, they sung with emphasis —

Guardian angels! now direct me,
Send to me the swain I love;
Cupid, with your bow protect me,
Help me, all ye powers above.

„The powers above“ did not, however, help the widow and Miss Costello, but deserted them in the very beginning of the next verse, which they in vain endeavoured to recollect. After many hems, and ineffectual attempts upon their truant memory, Miss Prudence set off, on Mr Joyce's suggestion, with „her own favourite little song of, 'Hark, sweet tally-ho, ho, ho!'" and when she came to the *refrain*, of —

All my fancy lies in Nancy,
Hark, sweet Tally-ho!

she turned her eyes on the young heir of Bog Moy, with an expression by no means equivocal as to „all *her* fancy;" and the soft impeachment to which he was no stranger, completed an embarrassment, that had already placed him in the purgatory reserved for the proud and the feeling. Under the most insupport-

able mortification, his changing colour betrayed a confusion it was now no longer in his power to conceal. The well applauded „Hark, sweet tallyho!” was followed by the songstress's earnest „Ahs,” and „Ohs,” applied to old Mr Joyce, to sing „Bumpers, Squire Jones,” a song for which the jolly old gentleman was celebrated all over the country. This he gave with great humour and effect, first in Carolan's own Irish words, and then in the excellent translation, which had been made of it by a judge of the land, * commencing with —

Ye good fellows all,
Who love to be told where there's claret, good store,
Attend to the call
Of one who's ne'er frightened,
But greatly delighted
With six bottles more.
Be sure you don't pass,
The good house Moneyglass,
Which the jolly red god so peculiarly owns;
'Twill well suit your humour,
For, pray what would you more
Than mirth, and good claret, and bumpers, 'Squire
Jones. etc. etc. etc.

„Bumpers, Squire Jones,” was as usual encored and toasted, with three times three: and

* Bumpers, Squire Jones, was translated by Baron Dawson, from Carolan's „Planxty Jones ” written in honour of Squire Jones, of Moneyglass, in the county Leitrim.

the cloth being in the interim removed, James Kelly announced to Miss Mac Taaf, „that the tay was wet, and the griddle cake, and sally lun buttered and served.” She arose, gave „the king” (the preliminary to the departure of the ladies); after which they withdrew to the best bed-room, amidst many prayers and supplications to remain,—always expected as matter of form from the gentlemen.

While some flounced on the bed, and others sprang out of the windows, and romped on the bawn, the „great ladies” who had already ordered their carriage, gathered round the Miss Mac Taafs: and if to learn the particulars of whatever concerned the family of the Taafs, from the flood down to the present moment, was an object of interest and curiosity, they were amply gratified, through the garrulity of that self-love, which always finds its account in autobiography. In these particulars, were included the birth, parentage, and education of their nephew; his military career abroad, and the prospects that awaited him at home, „if he behaved himself to their liking; the inheritance of Bog Moy, and the reversionary honours of the Barony of Ballyslattery, and the Green Knighthood of the Fassagh; together with their intention of looking out for a suitable match for him.

„The ould blood in protestant veins,” said Miss Mac Taaf; „one of the Lady Burkes of

the Clanrickards; or the Lady O'Brien's, of the Inchiquins, both his blood relations. And now, Lady Knocklofty," she added, in the honesty of her heart (won over by the well-applied flattery of Lady Knocklofty and her party, but firm to her principles), „though I shall be happy to see you and yours, at Bog Moy House, whenever ye may plaze to feavor us, in the way of ould Irish hospitality, yet I will tell ye frankly and fairly, that vote or voice of me or mine, or of the tinants on the property, shall never be given to my lord; for if th'ould blood does not stand by th'ould blood, what's to become of the country? And Dinnis Daly, ye are the man for my money, if the King of England was to set up for the place to-morrow against ye?"

This was said with as honest and as dignified a determination, as that with which Old Bess of Hardwick assured the reigning minister of England, „your man sha'nt stand."

„Well, my dear Miss Mac Taaf," said Lady Knocklofty, „I cannot expect you will do for us, what ye would not do for the king; but leaving you and my lord to talk county politics when you meet, allow me to say, that I shall be happy to follow up this acquaintance, originating, as it has, in some vulgar practical joke of the town's people; and I hope that you will soon give us the pleasure of your company at Beauregard, where we expect

the Lord-lieutenant in a few days from West Port."

The ladies then sent to let the gentlemen know that they were going. None of the gentlemen, however, attended the summons. O'Mealy was perfectly at home, and had his own reasons for remaining; and the General, Lord Charles, and Captain Montague, desirous to see the frolic out, delighted with the claret and the company, and calculating on the humours of the ball, supper, and raking pot of tea, of which the pretty Mrs Burke had informed her neighbour, Lord Charles (with such a commentary of eyes and smiles as detained him to whom they were directed)—they requested to have their horses left, and consigned the four-in-hand to the groom.

The three ladies now departed, attended to their carriage, and bowed off by nearly all the gentlemen who crowded to the door. On the return of the party to the dining-room, the claret jugs were again replenished, the punch was placed by Father Festus on the table, and the company continued their joyous orgies till midnight, when the hall was cleared out for the ball. As many as had preserved their centre of gravity were now busied in looking for partners for jigs and country dances. Lord Charles and Captain Montague secured the two reigning toasts, the beautiful Mrs Burke, and the lovely Honor Blake;

while Captain O'Mealy followed in the wake of Miss Mac Taaf, as she sailed about inquiring for her nephew, to lead out Miss O'Flaherty, of Lemon Field, and to open the ball, to the tune of Planxty Connor; exclaiming, vociferously, „What's gone with Murrogh? Did any one see my nephew, Lord Arranmore? Meejor O'Mailly, would you do me the feavour to tell my nephew, that I lay my injunctions on him to lave off — he that never drinks — and open the ball with Miss O'Flaherty.”

The Major assured Miss Mac Taaf that his lordship had left the dining-room at an early hour, resigning the chair to old Mr Joyce, on the plea of head-ache, as he had heard him say.

Miss Mac Taaf now expedited an estafette to the tower, to the orchard, to the vineyard; but Lord Arranmore was no more to be found, than the heir of the St Laurences', after the visitation of Granuaile to Howth Castle.

„Well, 'pon my honour and credit, now, after all,” said Major O'Mealy, „I would not wonder, Miss Mac Taaf, if Lady Knocklofty had kidnapped my lord, your nephew, after the manner of our great ancestor, you know.”

„Nor I, neither,” whispered Lord Charles to Captain Montague.

While emissaries were sent in search of the truant hope of the family, the ball was open-

ed by Lord Charles and Mrs Burke; Miss Mac Taaf consented to move a minuet with Mr Joyce (a custom of theirs for the last thirty years, upon similar occasions); and jigs, danced with a grace and spirit which astonished the members of English *bon ton*, gave the lovely animated performers another „renown,“ than that acquired by simple „tiring each other down.“

A supper, plenteous as the dinner, and quite as substantial, was served up, as soon as the last lingering devotees of the claret had left the dining-room; and the morning sun, as it rose, shone upon the unwearied votaries of pleasure, celebrating the last rites of the Jug Day over the raking pot of tea, which assembled as many of the party, as had not found it absolutely necessary to avail themselves of Miss Mac Taaf's barrack-beds and shakes-down.* Horses, carriages, and cars, then filled the bawn, while sails were hoisted in the creek; and of the merits of the claret, not a doubt was left in the mind of Miss Mac Taaf, for — not a drop was left in the cask.

* The shake down, barbarous as it may seem, had its precedent in those courts, to which we are now referred as models of manners. Down to the days of the Stuarts, the laying down at night and taking up in the morning of beds prevailed, from the king's own bedchamber, even to the steps of the canopy of state; where the esquire of the body flung his shake-down under the *dais*.

CHAPTER III.

BEAUREGARD.

Starvami sempre a contemplar quel volto,
Ogni pensiero, ogni mio bel disegno
In lei finira.

ARIOSTO.

THE sovereign ladies of Bog Moy, with all the love of power, and habit of exercising it, incidental to those who have not been broken down to a reciprocation of rights and privileges in the world's great school, ill brooked the independence of their nephew; whose comings and goings, whose wanderings, late and early, and preference of a book and a ramble, to their society, had already caused much bitter reproach and wearisome dictation. His elder aunt had more than once hinted that greater deference was expected from one who was destined to owe every thing to her favour; but when she learned that he had deserted the party, and vacated his place at the head of a table, where he had been placed to represent the Brigadier, her resentment was at its height. His evasion was deemed contempt; and anger and indignation stifled every anxiety, which his protracted absence might naturally have excited.

But when the night advanced, the morning and mid-day came, and the guests were all departed, save the Costellos and Father Festus (who were invited to stay and partake of the fragments of the feast, and talk over its events), and still no tidings were received of their absent nephew, their apprehension for his safety prevailed over every other sentiment and consideration: and all the horrors of bog-holes, precipices, unlucky places, and fairy grounds, were conjured up in fantastic array to account for his disappearance.

The Miss Mac Taafs, who loved a sensation, even a painful one, would not be comforted; and they were on the point of dispatching the priest, in addition to the numerous other emissaries, in search of the object of their alarm, when a horseman in the Knocklofty livery galloped past the parlour-window; and the next moment James Kelly, not yet quite sober, brought in two letters.

„It's Murrogh's sale, thank God,“ said Miss Taaf, eagerly breaking open one letter; while Miss Monica, cutting round the seal of the other, said, „And this is the Knocklofty coronet.“

They read as follows:—

„MY DEAR AUNT,

„A thousand apologies, and a thousand regrets for the anxiety and annoyance, which,

I fear or flatter myself, my absence must have occasioned. I was literally driven from the festivities of Bog Moy, by an insupportable head-ache, which rendered me incapable and unworthy of enjoying them. I sought my usual remedy, the open air; and with the intention of joining the ladies at the tea-table, on my return sauntered over the cliffs. Pursuing my walk, however, further than I had intended, I had unconsciously arrived at that fearful precipice, *Carrig-na-Phouka*, when I perceived, on the strand beneath, a carriage and four, without a driver, the tide advancing, and (as well as I could discern at that fearful distance, and by the fading light) some female figures standing on the sands. I saw, at once, the dilemma; and scrambling down, as well as I could—('The Lord bless me!' said Miss Mac Taaf, raising her eyes and hands; 'scrambling down Carrig-na-Phanke! where even the puffin-clifters scarce venture to go')—and found that Lady Knocklofty's coachman had, under James Kelly's auspices, rendered himself incapable of sitting on the coach-box,—that the groom was not more sober,—and that the tide was rapidly approaching the strand road. In short, you will imagine the rest. I mounted the box, and had the good fortune to convey the ladies in safety to Beauregard; which, by the by, we did not reach till long after midnight. Here I am, then, and here I

must remain, till you send me the pony and a valise, with a change of dress, when you may expect me, with all possible expedition, at Bog Moy.

„Your affectionate

„ARRANMORE.”

Miss Monica next read her letter.

„Beauregard.

„MY DEAR MISS MAC TAAF,

„As I find Lord Arranmore is sending for dressing things, I take the opportunity of assuring you that he has not suffered by his gallantry; and that having risked his life to save ours, in the most perilous descent from the cliffs to the strand (where we should have perished but for his timely assistance and great presence of mind), he has sustained no other injury, than getting drenched with the spray of the tide, which all but overwhelmed us. You deserve the penalty of his absence, for making my servants so drunk; but I hope to hear you have not suffered from your delightful Jug Day: and remain, with compliments to Miss Monica,

„My dear Miss Mac Taaf,

„Very truly yours,

„ALBINA KNOCKLOFTY.”

As Miss Mac Taaf felt it to be highly necessary to reply to so civil a note, and as highly politic to „lay her injunctions and commands“ on her nephew to return home immediately, — and as writing notes at Bog Moy was not an occupation of daily occurrence and practised facility, the Knocklofty groom was ordered „to put and step in, and get entertainment in the kitchen while the answers were preparing.“ It was evening before the pony was caught, the valise filled, the letters written, and the groom permitted to depart (much in the same state as his fellow servants had been sent from the hospitable threshold of Bog Moy, on the preceding evening).

The incident altogether opened a new vein of discussion to the party assembled in the best bed-room; and the civilities of Lady Knocklofty, her visit, and even the accident which marked her return home, were all considered by the Miss Mac Taaf as the results of deep calculation, and of a premeditated attack upon her own political independence, and on the heart and hand of her nephew and heir. „But Murrough O'Brien,“ apostrophized Miss Mac Taaf, tapping violently the lid of her snuff-box, „I'd sooner see ye in your winding-sheet, young and comely as you are, this day, than wedded to a follower of the Proudforts; and so the Honourable Miss Ketty Macguire may carry her honourability to another market: for

over rood or acre of Ballyslattery or Bog Moy she'll never reign, with my good will or consent."

„Nor with mine," said Miss Monica.

„Why, then, long may ye reign over it yourselves," said the priest, „for better can't come, and worse may."

Beauregard was one of those remote and superb seats, which in Ireland, and more particularly along the western and southern coasts of the island, rise like fairy structures, in the midst of dreariness and desolation. Wealth, taste, and luxury had given the word,

——— The desert smiled,
And Paradise was opened in the wild.

The castle stood upon an eminence, over the Atlantic Ocean, of which it commanded a sublime view, to the verge of the horizon; and it was sheltered by mountains piled upon mountains, — in the glens and recesses of which, the late Lord Proudfort had planted with a success which bore ample testimony of the fitness of the soil to such ornamental cultivation; and authenticated all that has been sung of the „woody Morven." The spacious mansion was furnished in all the cumbrous sumptuosity of the day. Massive sofas and *bergères* from Paris, carpets from Turkey, and crystal lustres from Venice, supplied the place of the nobler works of art; while mirrors, covering every wall, occupied the spaces,

which, in the houses of the old Anglo-Irish families, the Butlers, and Burkes, and the Talbots, are filled with the portraits of Vandyke and Lely.

On arriving at this sumptuous palace, the ladies expressed their acknowledgements to Lord Arranmore, even to the very hyperbole of gratitude; and a supper *en partie quarrée*, in Lady Knocklofty's dressing-room, enlivened by the wit of Lady Honoria, and the humour of Miss Macguire, was rendered delightful to him by the increasing softness and courtesy of his noble hostess; which formed a striking contrast to the noisy and heart-whole joviality he had left behind at Bog Moy. The circumstances of the adventure which had again rendered Lady Knocklofty and her friend Lady Honoria his debtors to so large an amount, and the humours of the Jug Day, formed the principal topics of conversation: and though, in deference to their nephew, the Miss Mac Taafs were spared, nobody else escaped. The finery of the dresses was criticised and laughed at, and the beauty of the women, about which Lord Charles had raved, was utterly denied.

„Animal beauty, indeed, there was,” said Lady Honoria; „but *'belle et bête'* is all that can be said of them. What do you say, Lord Arranmore?”

„There certainly was a great deal of animal
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beauty, Madam; a sort of beauty, however, *soit dit en passant*, that goes well with every other; and without which, I fear more intellectual charms go for very little."

„Oh, shocking!" said Lady Honoria. „Is this your doctrine?"

„For so sentimental a looking person, it is rather a coarse one," said Lady Knocklofty.

„I do not say it is *my* creed," said Lord Arranmore; „but I find it is a very prevailing heresy among the rest of my sex."

„He is quite right," said Lady Honoria: „men are wretches, so there's no more to be said about them. There was one, however, among the women in the bed-room, that was a clever, odd creature enough."

„What, the sort of nun, or *Madame la Chanoinesse*," asked Miss Macguire, „that I saw talking to you at the window?"

Lord Arranmore was all ear.

„Oh, yes, by-the-by," said Lady Knocklofty, „the woman in the bonnet. I heard her speaking French to you, which surprised me not a little."

„She speaks it like a *petite maîtresse du faubourg St Germain*," replied Lady Honoria.

„Lord Arranmore, you are eating nothing," said Lady Knocklofty; „though you must have earned an appetite by your long drive, and arduous exertions. Good heavens! how could you venture down that horrible cliff? did it not make you shudder to look down?"

„Oh!” he replied laughing, „like Panurge, *je ne crains que le danger*; and my early education in the Isles of Arran but I beg your ladyship's pardon, you were speaking of the lady in the deep bonnet.”

„What did she say to you, Lady Honoria?” asked Miss Macguire.

„Not much; but it was extremely *piquant* — sarcastic, indeed. I told her that our turn would come next, and she said '*pourquoi pas? moquons-nous des autres, et qu'ils se moquent de nous: c'est bien fait de toute part.*'”

„Oh! she found you out, my dear,” said Lady Knocklofty. „It was a pretty sentiment, however, for a *religieuse*.”

„Yes,” said Lady Honoria, but she told me she had got a plenary indulgence from the pope, for saying and doing odd things, for a century to come, in return for the sacrifice of coming to Ireland, to reform some order — I forget what — which she said amounts to nothing, but teaching the nuns to wear clean linen and wash their hands.”

„But are nuns allowed to wander about this way?” asked Lady Knocklofty, yawning yet looking under her eyes, and observing the interest with which Lord Arranmore listened to these details.

„Yes,” said Miss Macguire; „one of the nuns of Galway is the toast of the county, and parades her veil and rosary every night

on the Mall. To go into a nunnery here, is to take out a brevet of coquetry." *

„How came she at Miss Mac Taaf's, do you know, Lord Arranmore?" asked Lady Knocklofty.

„No, Madam, I never saw her before (heard her, I should say), for I scarcely saw her, even then."

„I suspect," said Lady Honoria, smiling significantly, „she came in, like other people, on the invitation of the knave of clubs; for Miss Monica knew nothing about her, and was just going to make some inquiries, when we came away."

„How odd!" said Lady Knocklofty, yawning again, and twirling a ring on her third finger, which now divided the attention of Lord Arranmore, with this account of the *bonne grâce*. It was the pearl of Lough Corrib!

„Come," said Lady Honoria, now yawning, or affecting to yawn, as she took a candle, „it is time to go to bed, — I never was so weary," — and kissing her friend on either cheek, she wished Lord Arranmore good night, gave a nod to Miss Macguire, and departed, Miss Macguire following her example.

* This is now no longer true. Through the influence of protestant persecution, all catholic institutions are daily acquiring new force; and (bigotry engendering bigotry) the papist grows more papistical, as the protestant becomes more proselytising.

„Lord Arranmore,” said Lady Knocklofty; „after so much fatigue, you will be happy to retire also. Shall I ring the bell for the groom of the chambers, to show you to your room?”

„The night is so fine,” said Lord Arranmore, looking through the glass-door that opened on a balcony, near which he was standing, „and I feel so little disposed to sleep, that I believe, now I have the pleasure of seeing your ladyship perfectly safe, I will walk down to the beach, and get into one of those fishing-boats, which will soon put out; and so relieve my aunts from their anxiety, as soon as I possibly can.”

Lady Knocklofty now rose too, and approaching the window, which she threw open, said, „We cannot possibly part with you thus; you must not always arrogate to yourself the power of conferring obligations, and escaping even from the expression of the gratitude they excite. Come, you must remain; and I will send for your dressing things, and write to *my aunts* Mac Taafs, to beg you off; and promise that they shall have their ‘faithless tassel back again.’ Besides, ‘I have a long arrear of — hate — to settle with Alonzo,’” and she dropped her eyes and smiled.

„And I, Madam,” said Lord Arranmore, in considerable emotion. „I have also — ” At that moment, the groom of the chambers entered.

„Morrison,” said Lady Knocklofty, „bring in chamber-lights, and get me a glass of lemonade: and be in the anti-room to conduct Lord Arranmore to his bed-chamber.”

Morrison bowed obedience, and retired to execute his orders.

Lady Knocklofty now passed the glass-door and advanced to the balcony, which hung immediately over a beautifully wooded inlet of the sea. A long line of silver moon-light was reflected from its glassy waters; while the morning-star was already glittering above a dark and rocky promontory to the left of the castle. „What a lovely night! what a sublime scene!” said Lady Knocklofty, throwing her arms over the balustrade of the balcony. O'Brien folded his, as he stood beside her, more occupied by herself, than even by the sublime and magnificent scenes to which she directed his attention. „When I am here,” she said, „I wonder how I can exist else-where. These are the scenes, and these the objects for which I was intended” (and she raised her eyes to his face). „You will scarcely believe how little I belong to the world, in which my ill (or as that world supposes, my good) fortune has thrown me. It is impossible, Lord Arranmore, to describe the emotions with which these scenes inspire me, — or the religious enthusiasm they awaken. Do you not think that such objects communicate to the mind a

portion of their own grandeur, and raise it to a loftier cast?"

„I can believe their influence, Madam," said Lord Arranmore, „for I have felt it; but I can imagine a position, in which even such scenes lose their influence, and where there is that within the heart, which dulls 'all feeling else, save what beats there.'"

„Can there then be any state of feeling, which an hour so calm, a scene so sublime — I had almost said so holy — would not exclusively engross? Can there be an emotion they would not compose, a thought they would not soothe?" asked Lady Knocklofty.

„Yes, Madam, I feel at this moment that there is," said Lord Arranmore. He paused, confused and agitated. Alone, and at such an hour, in such a place, with one who had once so deeply interested him, and who, through good and evil report, had still occupied his thoughts, he was at a loss how to proceed; but Lady Knocklofty had now turned her full and softened eyes, with a look of anxious inquiry, on his face, and he yielded to the impetuous frankness of his nature, to his usual impulse to

Parlar prima, e pensar poi,

and without any preliminary observation, he begged a moment's audience, and then entered at once upon the events of his recent life, his

conduct and his feelings, as far as they were connected with the interest she had taken in his fate, and with the party to which she was attached. While dwelling with an uncalled-for vehemence on his gratitude, his respect, his admiration for herself, he gave to sentiments of mere gallantry, drawn forth by the presence of their object, a warmth more consonant to the excitement of the moment, than to the nature of the feelings which prompted them.

Lady Knocklofty listened with the deepest attention, leaning her cheek upon her hand, her eyes turned full upon his, and her quick respiration almost fluttering the curls upon his brow, and heaving the muslin scarf thrown over her bosom.

„I have always believed you,” she said, when he had ceased to speak, „more sinned against than sinning; and party runs so high in this wretched country, while the government people feel themselves so imperiously called upon to put down every symptom of a revolutionary nature, that — But this is not the point. Some of my dearest friends are among *your* party — Lord Walter, for instance. It was not, then, the political crimes alluded to, that injured you in my opinion; my feelings were more at home, more selfish. What did you mean by returning me my ring?”

„I return your ring, Lady Knocklofty? Gracious heavens!”

„And with that insulting inuendo, too; which, however well it might have become the standard of the Irish Brigade, was, when addressed to one, who, in the fulness of her gratitude (which vanity might have construed into another sentiment!) — ”

„Good God! what can your ladyship allude to? The ring, the precious ring, that is now on your finger, was drawn most mysteriously from mine, as I lay asleep in St Patrick's Hall, and exchanged for that which I now wear.”

„It was sent to me,” said Lady Knocklofty, „wrapped up in a fold of paper, on which was written, '*Fais ce que doy, arrive que pourra.*'”

Lord Arranmore changed colour; the voice and counsel of the *bonne grâce* seemed to sound again in his ear, even from the lips of one, who made him feel every moment how difficult it was, in particular positions, to follow the admonition.

„Lady Knocklofty,” he said, after a pause, „I am the victim of some mysterious agency — be it for my good, or for my ill — of whose existence I am only conscious by the influence it exerts over my actions. By whom my ring was purloined, I know not. I had, indeed, suspected that it was yourself; and that, *joué de toute part*, this trick made a part of the general frolic, in which I played so very foolish a part.”

„Then it was not you, who sent it back to

its imprudent donor," said Lady Knocklofty; „and, covering an insult in an epigram, made her doubly feel her folly and indiscretion?"

„Me! Good heavens! what in my character, my conduct (even little as you can know of either), could lead your ladyship to indulge a suspicion so derogatory to the feelings of a gentleman — of a man? Give me back," (said O'Brien, with eagerness), „that precious ring: I reclaim it in right, in justice; it is the only indemnification I *can* receive for the injury you have inflicted on one, who (many as may be his faults and frailties) is yet guiltless in all where woman is concerned."

The white hand, on which the ring gleamed, lay on the balustrade, like snow in the moonshine. Lady Knocklofty sighed and smiled, and said, „No, I must not, ought not, cannot give it again. Remember, *fais ce que doy*.

„And I will take the advice as my wishes construe it," said Lord Arranmore, ardently; and raising the unresisting hand, timidly and reverentially, he had nearly drawn off the ring, when a loud, shrill blast suddenly and sadly sounded from beneath. Lady Knocklofty started, and drew back her hand; and the ring fell into the deep waters below.

Both remained for a moment silent. To one, that solemn, savage sound, came with an awful effect; for the erring are always superstitious. To the other, it came as a well-known warn-

ing — it was the mountain modulation of Shane's sylvan horn. A moment afterwards the splash of an oar was heard; but the shadows of the beetling rocks concealed the boat — if boat there was — which might have skirted the indentures of the shore, and contained this strange haunter of woods and waters.

„How wild, how strange!” said Lady Knocklofty shuddering.

„I fear,” said Lord Arranmore, „I fear the sudden sound has alarmed you. It probably came from some fishing boat cruising about the creeks.”

„It has indeed shaken me,” said Lady Knocklofty softly, „for I am horribly nervous: but suppose we take it as a warning.”

„Perhaps I should,” said Lord Arranmore; „for if there is danger, it can be to me alone.”

„I trust there is none to either; and for you, though chance has led you into the enemy's camp, you are at least protected by the laws of war.”

„But,” said Lord Arranmore, smiling, „I am here without the knowledge of the commander of the forces, and being neither hostage nor prisoner, I cannot claim the protection of those laws.”

„No,” said Lady Knocklofty, „a prisoner you certainly are not; and if *you will go* at this unseasonable hour, and after such fatigues, my carriage shall attend you; but — “

„Will go! Good Heavens! Lady Knocklofty, I must, I ought: restored to your good opinion, flattered, perhaps intoxicated by your condescension — But judge for me; the guest of Lord Knocklofty I can never be, and your guest, in his absence, I ought not to be.”

„So young and so discreet! and yet discretion is not the virtue I suspect you of,” replied Lady Knocklofty significantly.

„You would wrong your judgment, if you did; but there is a certain feeling of self-respect, a voice that will be heard.”

„Come, come,” said Lady Knocklofty, „place your feelings of self-respect in abeyance for the present; and listen to a voice that is not used to solicit in vain. Instead of embarking in a fishing-boat for the port of Bog Moy, you shall commit yourself to a well-aired bed, to which Morrison, you see, is ready to pilot you. Still I enter into your feelings, and respect them; and had I such a son, thus would I wish him to act.” She sighed softly.

„And had I such a mother,” said O'Brien, taking her hand, „I would — ”

„Endeavour to run away from her, as you do now from me,” interrupted Lady Knocklofty, laughing, and struggling to release her hand.

„And fail in the attempt, as I do now,” said Lord Arranmore.

„Then you will stay,” said Lady Knocklofty,

playfully, „under this fatal roof, for one night at least. Hark! do you not hear ‘the raven himself is hoarse that croaks the entrance of Duncan under our battlements.’ ”

„I hear but one sound,” replied Lord Arranmore with great animation, „’tis the voice of a syren! and I will not affect to resist a spell to which the wisest have yielded. I accept your ladyship’s hospitality for this night, and to-morrow — ”

„Oh! for to-morrow,” said Lady Knocklofty, gaily, „sufficient to the day is the evil thereof; but I will sign a bond of release, if you have any fears for your personal liberty.”

„I confess I have,” he replied eagerly; „but for the bond!”

„For the present, however,” said Lady Knocklofty, throwing down her eyes. „you must accept my note of hand.” Lord Arranmore pressed the hand thus graciously presented to him, to his lips, with uncontrollable ardour; and Lady Knocklofty withdrawing it, in apparent confusion, re-entered the dressing-room, and called Morrison to conduct Lord Arranmore to his room. Morrison, who was dozing in the anti-chamber, entered, Lady Knocklofty rang for her maid, but suddenly turning round, and beckoning her guest back to the window, she said, in a low voice,

„It is right I should tell you (for perhaps you are not aware) how deeply you have been

calumniated by our side of the house. I do not allude alone to heresy and schism, atheism and sedition; but there is a rumour that you were dismissed your regiment under circumstances which render it a delicate matter for military men to cultivate your acquaintance. This, my young friend, Lord Charles, is most desirous to do; and, in short, you must take an opportunity of talking with him to-morrow, after breakfast. Know him, and like him for my sake."

Lord Arranmore turned pale with rage and indignation. His lips trembled with emotion. „Can I see Lord Charles now?“ he demanded eagerly.

„He is not yet returned, of course, or we should have heard of it,“ replied Lady Knocklofty.

Lord Arranmore now stood biting his lips and looking at his nails; and the conflicts portrayed on his changeful features, evinced that thoughts dark and stormy as thunder clouds were passing over his mind. Lady Knocklofty gazed on him with that expression with which a virtuoso eyes some splendid production of art.

„I am sorry,“ she said, „that what I have mentioned has affected you. Pray think no more of it, till to-morrow at least. It was right you should know it before you met Lord Charles at breakfast.”

„Certainly,“ said Lord Arranmore; „and I

owe your ladyship thousand thanks for putting it into my power to enter upon my defence against the blackest and most libellous calumny that the wickedness of party ever invented, to wring the feelings, and blast the reputation of its victim. And yet, Lady Knocklofty, I cannot, will not, stop to justify myself from this groundless, infamous charge. If Lord Charles believes it, let him. To explain would be to commit the only dignity I have left. But to you — ”

He drew forth a pocket-book, and taking from it a letter, he continued. „This letter was written to my father on my leaving the Austrian service. I had already tendered my resignation, which the Prince de Ligne did me the honour not to accept; giving me time to re-consider my purpose. Meanwhile the insolence of a superior officer, who affected to treat an Irish gentleman as he was daily treating his subaltern officers — But I will not obtrude upon your ladyship a wearisome detail of circumstances, without interest for you, and full of disgust for me. *Pour trancher le mot*, my challenge was refused, and I was permitted to retire.“

Lady Knocklofty took the letter and said, „I find it is a service of danger to accuse you; it only increases the prepossession which it is your privilege to inspire. Well, *fixez-vous à moi*, and now, good night, and fair-boding dreams.”

„Good night, dear Lady Knocklofty,” said O'Brien, soothed by her smiles, and more than soothed by her flattery. Bowing on the hand, again presented him, he followed the groom of the chambers along the carpeted corridors to the elegant sleeping-room prepared for him; a strange contrast to the bawn, and the tower, and the Brigadier's press bed at Bog Moy.

„What a creature!” said Lady Knocklofty; which in a woman's lips means everything expressive admiration or of contempt, according to the inflexion of voice or expression of smile with which it is accompanied. A deep sigh was the comment on this text; and, throwing herself into the cushioned depths of her fauteuil, while her maid placed a *peignoir* over her shoulders and relieved her tresses from the confinement of black pins and bandeaus, she opened the letter of the Prince de Ligne, and read as follows:

„*A Milord Arranmore, etc., etc.*

„MILORD,

„Votre fils a fait une grande indiscretion; il ne fera jamais une bassesse. Il s'est cru obligé de se battre avec un officier supérieur, et la discipline autrichienne s'est crue obligée de lui donner sa démission; c'est dans l'ordre. Il a été mon aide-de-camp, je vou-

drais bien qu'il le fût encore. Je vous le renvoie avec regret, mais avec honneur. Il est peu docile, il ne sera jamais rampant. Depuis l'âge de quinze ans, volontaire dans mon régiment, il a eu des petites aventures très-brilliantes dans toutes les campagnes. Mais ce brave militaire n'est plus soldat — il m'assure qu'il ne le sera jamais. Cependant il sera toujours courtois chevalier, prêt à venger les injures des femmes, et à redresser les torts de la société. Voilà une vocation assez dangereuse! Emoussez sa fougue par quelque profession sobre, et il deviendra bon citoyen; mais gardez-vous bien de lui ôter ce feu de l'âme, source, peut-être, de quelques imprudences, mais aussi de toutes les vertus.

Je suis, milord,

Avec la plus haute considération.

etc. etc. etc.

„LE PRINCE DE LIGNE.“

In an elegant breakfast-room, opening into a lawn, studded with flower beds, and commanding the ocean with its numerous isles and islets, Lord Arranmore found himself on the morning following his arrival at Beauregard. Although it was mid-day, no one had yet attended the breakfast-table, and he had ample leisure to reflect on the unlooked-for events of the preceding evening.

These incidents had not only occupied the sleepless vigils of Lord Arranmore, but fur-

nished endless sources of reflection — as alone and spiritless he occupied, for far more than an hour, the sofa in the breakfast parlour. More than once he started, and asked himself if all were not a dream, — a question which the re-appearance of his masked tormentor upon the scene, in a time and place little expected, rendered not unnatural. He was now convinced that the voice of the *bonne grâce* was not unknown to him; and connecting it with her advice conveyed in his own motto, her peculiar foreign accent, and her spirited conversation, he was almost led to believe that this reformer of Irish convents was one of the *Penitenti Rosse* of the fancy ball in Dublin; the *Nuccia* of the Carnival in Rome, — perhaps the harpist at the castle, the vision of O'Brien House, the guide of the grotto at Cong, and, in a word,

Le fantôme mystérieux qui troubla son repos, by an almost supernatural agency, wherever his wayward destiny had led him. Her transmutations, various as they were, seemed to him but to realize the artifices of Annibal (as described by his favourite historian, Polybius), „who procured artificial suits of hair, adapted to persons of every age, and habits that corresponded with them; and varying his dress continually, lay so well concealed, that not those alone who had seen him transiently, but even his intimate acquaintance could scarcely know him.“

What the object of this female Annibal might be, he could not conjecture. The sum of all his reflections, inferences, and combinations was, that she was Irish by birth, foreign by breeding; — that her name was O'Flaherty, and her residence a religious retreat in the mountains of Moycullen; — that she was interested in his destiny, for others, or for himself; — that she had been known to his father, as she was to his uncle and to Shane (one whom he now believed the agent of all). But if this „airy nothing” had indeed a local habitation and a name, what a woman! how organized! how gifted! how accomplished! She justified all that he had heard of the talents and acquirements of the sister Irene of Rome, the foundress of *Cuore Sagro*. If with such a mind her person corresponded — If with such an intellect and such talents, she had the eyes, the smile of Lady Knocklofty, — such eyes, and smiles as gleamed on him at parting the night before, — he sighed and shuddered; and folding his hands on his brows, threw back his head on the sofa, and wished he was safely, away, even at Bog Moy.

„*Il existe une morale fondée sur la nature de l'homme, indépendante de toutes opinions spéculatives, antérieure à toutes les conventions.*” *

* Franklin, cité par Condorcet dans son éloge de ce philosophe.

This moral existed, and in great intensity, in the mind of him who now applied to himself the observation of one he loved to read and cite; but what passions had not this *morale* to combat? Lord Arranmore determined, cost what it might, to return that day to Bog Moy; yet three days, three delightful days, elapsed without his putting the sage resolution into practice. The letter of the Prince de Ligne had produced all the influence it was calculated to exert upon minds, on which the rank and celebrity of the writer were more powerful than even his genius and his worth.

With Lord Charles it reinstated him as a gallant and distinguished officer. With the worldly Lady Honoria, and with Miss Macguire, the *homme comme il faut*, the aide-de-camp and friend of the Prince de Ligne, was a far different personage from the son of a pauper peer and relapsed papist, „whom nobody knew.“

Lady Honoria had now also other views, than when she had preached discretion to her fair friend and disciple, on the occasion of the review in the Phoenix Park. Mr Stratton was ill in Dublin of an incurable disease, increased by daily intemperance. The influence she had obtained over Lord Knocklofty, through his vanity and indolence, was now becoming a habit, — the tyrant of weak minds and of idle ones. Nature and fate, she believed, combined to complete the ruin of Lady Knocklofty.

Nothing could save her: and as somebody must inevitably benefit by her errors (a wife being a necessary appendage to a great man), she saw no reason why she should not be the future lady of Proudfort House, and of Beauregard, as well as another. Sometimes, indeed, her wavering calculations had been directed to influencing the Duke, sometimes to winning upon Lord Charles, who was *aux écoutes*: but now they were all concentrated on the point most consonant with her wishes, by the re-appearance of that individual upon the scene, whom, in her long experience of the fancies and passions, platonic or capricious, of Lady Knocklofty, was the person who had most worked on her imagination; or on that very equivocal species of sensibility, she called her heart.

She had purposely left them a *champ libre* for that mutual explanation, which must inevitably take place. The confident of all Lady Knocklofty's secret thoughts, she guessed, that the re-action would be favourable to the restoration of the offender to her good graces. When therefore she heard Lord Arranmore retire to his chamber, she stole softly to Lady Knocklofty's dressing-room, and found her in the first raptures of the perusal of the Prince de Ligne's letter. The maid was immediately dismissed.

„There,” said Lady Knocklofty, „you see my first impression was right; and that this

'boy with the eyes,' turns out a hero of romance after all.

Lady Honoria read the letter with attention.

„Is not this a charming character?" asked Lady Knocklofty.

„*Tant pis pour vous, ma belle,*" said Lady Honoria, with an admonitory shake of the head.

„However," said Lady Knocklofty, „you know my way. I must be amused, and above all, in this tiresome place."

„Amused!" said Lady Honoria, shaking her head again, and looking moral.

„Come, come," said Lady Knocklofty, smiling; „let me have my frolic out."

„Your frolic, child! — your fever, you mean; an intermitting one, however, for I thought you were 'dismissed cured,' long since."

„Psha! I never was on the sick list; or if I were I am now so perfectly convalescent, that you may trust me. I mean nothing but '*a little sport withal,*' as Rosalind says, to enable me to get through this eternal electioneering summer; nor no further in sport neither, than with safety of a pure blush I may in honour come off again."

„Well, to quote from your own Rosalind, *en tout bien et tout honneur*, of course," said Lady Honoria, laughing; „one thing is very clear, with respect to your 'gentle, strong, and valiant Orlando,' viz. that it rests only

with you 'to cry *hem* and have him,' if such an idle victory can be an object to you."

„I am not so sure of that," said Lady Knocklofty, shaking her head; „and in the difficulty of the conquest lies, perhaps, its sole value. His Irish spirit is sadly at odds with his Irish gallantry; and to fall in love out of the ranks of opposition, he considers a misprision of nationality; in fact, he has as good as told me so."

„And therefore you are *piqué au jeu*," observed Lady Honoria. „Oh! there is nothing like the quint-essential *coquetterie* of you women of sentiment."

„Come, now, confess," said Lady Knocklofty, „that to vanquish the proud resistance of this *Ame Paladin*, will be an amusing task for a dull summer at least; and that it will

Be pastime passing excellent,
If it be husbanded with modesty,

to witness the struggle between patriotism and prepossession in that young and ardent mind. What a principle to overcome! what prejudice to vanquish!"

„But you do not mean to let Lord K. and the Duke find him here? You will let the 'foolish fluttering thing' go back to his cage at Bog Moy, after a day or two?"

„Certainly: just birdlime his feathers as a warning against presumption, and then let him

go. In short, there is a pleasure in making a conquest, even though you should turn it to no account."

„To what account can you turn it?" said Lady Honoria, yawning, „except you could reconcile Lord K. to him, in the case of old Daly's death, and a new election; then, indeed, the influence of his popular name might be of use."

„A good idea," said Lady Knocklofty. „My dear Honoria, they ought to make you Chancellor of the Exchequer; your resources are exhaustless."

„Such as they are, my dear Albina, they are always at your service," said Lady Honoria; and the dear friends and confidants then again kissed; and parted for the night.

On the morning following this „colloquy sublime," the entrance of Miss Macguire with her keys of office (that is, of the tea-store), put to flight the train of thoughts, and scattered the thick-coming visions, which gave to the attitude and countenance of Lord Arranmore, the character of one absorbed in waking dreams of deepest reverie. Smiling upon the aide-de-camp of the Prince de Ligne, as she had never smiled upon the prisoner of the castle-guard, whom she had assisted to play off, for the amusement of Lord Kilcolman, she now rallied him upon his deep abstraction, and hinted her suspicions, that some of the fair

Os and Macs of the Irish Paphos, from whom they had conveyed him away, were the cause of it. There was something so obviously false and heartless in this pleasantry, that Lord Arranmore replied to it coldly; and he was relieved, though somewhat embarrassed, by the entrance of Lady Knocklofty, leaning on the arm of Lord Charles. They entered from the lawn, on which the breakfast-room opened by a French window. Lord Charles almost rushed on him, with an unmeasured cordiality, characterized by his usual awkwardness and *brusquerie*. He shook both his hands; and without alluding to the past, muttered something, that seemed intended for an apology, or a compliment; it was not easy to discover which.

The entrance of Lady Honoria gave a turn to the conversation, and the Jug Day at Bog Moy formed its principal topic.

„When did you get home, Lord Charles?” asked Lady Knocklofty; „and where did you leave the General and Horace Montague?”

„At their quarters in St Grellan: they are going to a review at Galway; and they only arrived in time to dress and be off.”

„And the Brigade Major?” asked Miss Macguire, laughing, „Cousin O'Mailly, of the Owl's country?”

„Oh! by Jove, I never saw a fellow so happy Lord Arranmore, he'll cut you out,

you may depend upon that. I heard your aunt invite him to shoot on the bog; and offer him the services of Paddy Whack, and a bed in the barrack-room."

"I assure you," said Lady Honoria, "he asked me gravely, if there was really a knight-hood in the family like the knight of Kerry's."

"Of course, you swore to the fact," said Lady Knocklofty.

"Of course. But seriously, Lord Arranmore, I advise you to have a strict eye to your elder aunt; for O'Mealy is evidently enamoured *des beaux yeux de sa cassette*, and if you are not quite sure of the intail —." Lady Honoria stopped short, observing, that on the subject of his aunts, Lord Arranmore *n'entendait pas raillerie*; and then added, in another tone, "Joking apart, O'Mealy is such a ways-and-means fellow, that I have no doubt he will make Bog Moy his head quarters, when the Knockloftys are gone."

"And excellent quarters they are," said Lord Charles. "Never tasted such claret in all my life. How it did flow, by Jove! Then the women! what lovely creatures. There is not a rout in London could show such a turn out: and amazing good manners too, I can tell you. There is nothing in your Dublin set like that Mrs Paddy Lynch, with her large eyes, and the dimple in her chin. By Jove! only think of the four Miss Roistrums, as compared with these Connaught beauties."

„The comparison is not fair,” said Miss Macguire, piqued for the honour of Dublin society. „The Miss Roistrums are your *tic douloureux*, Lord C.; besides, they are bad specimens. They owe their place in society, to their father's place under government; and are handed down from viceroy to viceroy, and regiment to regiment, with state-chairs and barrack-fixtures. Pray don't quote them, when you go back to your set in London, as specimens of the Dublin beauties.”

„Why, one sees them every where,” said Lord Charles; „while quantities of pretty creatures, whom one only meets at the park, the theatre, or the rotunda, are kept back, because they don't belong to the official set. One does not come to Ireland to be rode roughshod over by the demi-ton of London. Why, there are those nine Miss Flamboroughs, as we call them, who give themselves such airs here, and cut right and left in the *hauteur* of their 'insolence of office.' In London, it is another thing with them.”

„But, still, they are so very pleasant, and talk so much, and so well,” said Miss Macguire.

„Yes, and talk and look so like, that Falkland of our's made love t'other night to Miss Emmeline, thinking she was his old London flame, Miss Anna Maria.”

„*N'importe*,” said Lady Honoria: „it is a

joint-stock concern, a family firm, — we call it the New Consolidated London Assurance Company — and, provided you deal with the house, it matters not with which of the partners.“

Every body laughed.

„Bravo,” said Lord Charles. „You Irish women are so pretty and so witty, and give such good nick-names, you might carry all before you, if you were only true to yourselves. What do you say, Lord Arranmore?”

„I am of the non-importation confederacy, of course,” said Lord Arranmore, laughing.

„Beauty is the stable commodity of the country, and superior to any fabric which foreign policy would impose on us. But it is the old fashion of Ireland to neglect its native produce, and to give the preference to whatever comes marked with the stamp of a distant market.”

Lord Arranmore now rose to take his leave; but against this proposition there was a general outcry. The silken flag of a beautiful barge, which was that day to take the party to the Isles of Arran, was fluttering through the trees, in the bay below.

„A long-planned expedition,” said Lady Knocklofty, „for which you, Lord Arranmore, are yourself accountable; and we could not possibly undertake our voyage of discovery under better auspices, than when piloted by the chief of the Isles.”

The proposal was irresistible : but yet Lord Arranmore resisted. „He had only his evening dress, — was in shoes and stockings.“ That was easily remedied; Lord Charles had made up some jackets and trowsers for the boating parties of Beauregard; and a suit of them was at this service.

But his aunts! He was desirous to relieve the anxiety which his absence must naturally awaken.

A man and horse would do that much more expeditiously.

The man and horse were accordingly dispatched; and the chief of the Isles of Arran once more visited the rocks of his nativity, and realm of his fancied inheritance, under circumstances the least probable, and least „dreamed of in his philosophy.“

CHAPTER IV.

THE EXCURSIONS.

Noi ci mettemmo per un bosco
Che da nessun sentiero era segnato.

DANTE.

Your accent is something finer, than you could
purchase in so removed a dwelling.

As You Like it.

BRIGHT skies and favouring gales, with eyes and spirits as sunny and as light, gave promise of a halcyon voyage to the gay pilgrims bound to the Isle of Saints, as the party from Beau-regard, reinforced by two young *militaires* from St Grellan, put off from the shore. Every feature of the beautiful Bay of Galway had its effect. The mountains of Connemara stood out from the clear and cloudless horizon; numerous islands spotted the glossy surface of the deep; and green shores and gliding barks gave touches of home scenery and a busy movement to the whole, which took from the usual dreariness of sea views.

Lady Knocklofty observed to O'Brien, with whom she conversed in a low tone, that „it was all enchantment,” and he felt that it was so: yet, like other spells, it operated with a

mingled sensation of sadness and pleasure; and more pleased with others than with himself, he sighed to think, that he was revisiting the Isles of Arran, under auspices the least appropriate to such an occasion.

Scarcely, however, had the barge approached the first and smaller of the isles, when the wind changed, and a thick sea-fog sprung up and veiled out every speck of land. The pilot, unable to make for the port of Arranmore, with wind and tide against him, was glad to avail himself of the impatience and entreaties of the ladies, to run into the first of the islands which presented itself. They had scarcely landed, when the fog discharged itself in a heavy rain; and the hovel of a kelp gatherer, situated among the rocks, was the only asylum against the „pitiless pelting of the storm,” which the thinly inhabited and rocky spot afforded.

Here an excellent cold dinner, the object and reward of all parties of pleasure, with wines of the choicest description, and all the *fun* of those little *desagrémens*, which constitute the *agrémens* of all such expeditions, occupied and amused the time, though it did not fulfil the intentions of the party.

Towards evening, however, the deluge suddenly ceased; a brilliant rainbow threw its arch of promise across the calm sky, the winds were hushed, and without a „breath the blue

wave to curl," even had there been a wave (which there was not) to be curled by them. The party re-embarked at sunset; the sails were furled, the oars plied, and moonlight seas, and a balmy atmosphere, with the exhilaration produced by Burgundy and Champagne, in some of the party, and with causes as exciting in others, rendered the prolonged voyage home still more delightful than the shorter transit of the outward-bound crew had proved in the morning. It was midnight when the voyagers entered the well lighted dining-room of Beauregard; where a supper was served, which did not want the zest of a keen appetite to recommend it to the palates of the guests. A note from Miss Mac Taaf was put into Lord Arranmore's hands, as he had just seated himself by Lady Knocklofty at the table, which ran as follows:

„DEAR MURROGH,

„I must take lave to inform you that I am highly displazed with your whole behaviour and conduct in regard of the Brigadier, who never left his own table as long as he could sit at it nor after, more particularly on a Jug Day. No scrambler over rocks nor cliffs nor book-worm; and wonders much ye got to the bottom with life, being the first bird or baste ever climbed down *Carrig-na-Phouka*. And am highly delighted ye saved Lady Knock-

lofty's life under God's mercy to whom all praise with best regards, and would have written as intended (also my sister Monica) but not a scrap of paper left in the place, though have meditated sending for half a quire by Paddy the post from St Grellan this week back for which call on your return at Mrs Costello's. I send a change of linen with your foreign riding coat, also the pony and boy tied up in your white French cambrick pocket handkerchief. No need of saddle-bags which you can ride home the boy walking. And lay my commands and injunctions on you to return to dinner, not forgetting the lock of the Brigadier's fusil at Peter Fynch's — Major O'Mailly shooting himself here to-morrow — so mind you are back to the minute, as you value the regard of your affectionate Aunt,

„MABLE MAC TAAF.”

Lord Arranmore coloured as he read, twisted up the incoherent farrago, and crammed it into his pocket; indignant at the servitude to which this despotic old woman sought to reduce him, and resolved to resist it, even for the short time he intended to remain at Bog Moy.

„That note bodes no good to our gipsy party in the mountains to-morrow, I suspect,” said Lady Knocklofty, whose eyes were fixed on his

countenance, on which annoyance was strongly painted. He smiled, and answered.

„My aunts desire their best compliments to your Ladyship, and congratulate you on your safe arrival at Beauregard.”

„But is Cinderella's hour come?” asked Lady Honoria, jeeringly — „that's the point; or does the ill-natured old fairy refuse a further furlough?”

„The old fairy,” replied Lord Arranmore, „has every claim to my respect; but none upon my time. It is at your Ladyship's service, in any way you please to dispose of it.”

„Take care what you say,” said Lady Honoria: „you know not how much you may commit yourself. The man who makes me professions, gives me breath; but he who gives me his time . . . Ask Lady Knocklofty if that is not the *pierre de touche*; *elle s'y connaît, bonne femme*.”

„Oh! pray don't apply to me,” said Lady Knocklofty, „I have no maxims on any subject; I am the slave of impulse, and wholly led by my feelings, not by my experience: any one may deceive me, as long as I deceive myself, and that” (she added with a sigh) „I generally do.”

„That is the true secret of deceiving others in time,” said Lady Honoria. „*On commence par être dupe, on finit par être fripon*. That is

we begin by being *sensible*, and we end by feigning it."

„My hour is not then come," said Lady Knocklofty. „I fear — I feel it is far off."

„But it will come," replied Lady Honoria; „it is the natural course of things!"

„I may grow old," observed Lady Knocklofty, passionately, „but never insensible."

„When you are old, my dear, you may grow what you like, but don't talk of it—to live to loock through spectacles, and see nothing but wrinkles! Ouf!"

Everybody asserted, that she, beyond all her sex, never could grow old.

„So the men told Ninon," said Lady Honoria, „and yet while *entre les deux âges*, what was her confession — '*Tout le monde me dit, que j'ai moins à me plaindre du temps qu'une autre; mais de quel façon que ce soit, si l'on m'avait proposé une telle vie, je me serais pendue.*'"

„The most horrible of all fates," said Lady Knocklofty, „is not to live to grow old; it is to preserve the feelings fresh, when the person is withered — and yet there are hearts, which time cannot reach."

„Oh! for your Lady Pentweasles, and Lady Wishforts, your green hearts and grey hairs, I give them up," said Lady Honoria, laughing, and every body laughed with her.

The men all thought Lady Honoria very

clever; but they felt that the credulous and passionate Lady Knocklofty was irresistible: the conversation was then abruptly turned by Lady Knocklofty to the intended excursion of the following day.

Among the wildest and most romantic sites of the lower range of the Connemara mountains, and at ten miles distance from Beauregard, Lord Knocklofty had recently built and furnished a beautiful sporting lodge, to which, from its situation, he had given the name of „the Heaths.“ To this lodge he was about to repair in the early part of the ensuing week, with a large party from Lord Altamont's (the Lord Lieutenant included). To inspect the necessary preparations for so distinguished a company, in so remote a place, Lady Knocklofty had planned a gipsy party into the mountains for the following day. Servants and sumpter-horses were to precede her; and as the Heaths were only approachable (after the first four miles) by bridleways, through the ravines and mams of the uncivilized region, the whole party went of necessity on horseback. Lord Arranmore had spoken of his return to Bog Moy on the next morning, yet no one was surprised to see him *de la partie*. Lady Knocklofty was a most accomplished horsewoman; she never looked so well as on horseback — the dress, the air, the exercise became her; it was her stronghold of coquetry, to which

she never failed to resort in all cases of emergency: and as her two fair friends rode almost as well as herself, a *cavalcata* answered the views and purposes of all, and all took the field with grace and spirit.

The party was reinforced by the General and his Aides-de-Camp, all feathers and aiguillettes; and as it passed the gates of Beauregard, it had that gallant air which characterized the courtly cavalry of Whitehall, or Newmarket, when the monarch himself acted as the *cavalierotto* to the Stuart or Jennings of the day.

Lord Arranmore rode a favourite mare of Lady Knocklofty's (which seemed as much inclined to keep close to its mistress, as its rider), having lent his sure-footed pony to Miss Macguire. He had got entangled in this second party by the provoking hit at his dependence, launched by Lady Honoria; at least he attributed the change in his intention to the circumstance, which, perhaps, might have influenced, but certainly did not exclusively occasion it. His whole existence, since he had left Bog Moy, had been a thralldom. Dissatisfied with himself, every principle at variance with his position, he had got involved in lines the most delicate, and difficult to break through. Long and dangerous tête-à-têtes (the more dangerous, because their soft muttering was sanctioned by being carried on in

society) had put him in possession of a secret, which men of the world well know how to appreciate, but which, to one, ardent and inexperienced, whose very „virtues had turned traitors to themselves,” was estimated by another standard than that which the world supplies.

Not even the seductions of Lady Knocklofty (and her habitually haughty, high-spirited demeanour rendered them but more seducing), had touched his heart. But at five and twenty there are other avenues to the frailties of nature than that of the heart. Lord Arranmore sighed to think that he had not even the excuse of feeling, to sanction his weakness, which, however, he placed to the account of gratitude; and he began this gipsy expedition with the firm resolution, that it should be his last. To provide against the possibility of again falling into temptation, he had dispatched „the boy” with every thing but the ridingdress he wore, to Bog Moy; and he resolved to return to the Brigadier’s tower, and to all the horrors of his temporary dependence, that night.

The gipsy expedition was begun immediately after breakfast, in all the brilliancy of spirits incidental to that first, fresh season of the day. The ornamental grounds, the flourishing plantations, and old stunted woods of Beauregard were soon passed. The verdure

of its pasturage, and the yellow blossom of its meadows and corn fields, were gradually exchanged for the brown plains of peat bog and heathy swamps, studded with turf stacks; while a few half-naked cottiers, walking up to their middle in the boggy soil, and bearing bushes and stones to patch the bog road lately laid down by the great lord of the district, exhibited in their famished looks and squalid rags, a painful contrast to the splendid party, who turned aside their eyes, as they passed, in pity or disgust.

The high, wild mountains of Connemara soon came upon the eye in all their real ruggedness, and divested of those aërial tints with which distance had hitherto beautified them; and their gap, or pass, dark and narrow, was entered with feelings almost of awe and apprehension. On either side, the ravine (scarcely admitting two persons to ride abreast) rose in a long line of lofty and magnificent precipices, shattered by the elements, into the boldest and most grotesque forms, ridge shelving above ridge, like artificial galleries. Hollows filled with dark vapours, or gleaming with living waters; mountains, succeeding to mountains, receding, softening, and again starting forward upon the horizon, and admitting through their breaks blue glimpses of the distant ocean, or nearer gleams of the waters of Lough Corrib, cheated the wear-

ness of the way, by that changeful variety which mountain scenery alone possesses.

Escaping from a mam, whose rock appeared ready to split and fall upon the heads of the intruders, and suddenly descending a green and slippery track, which fell to the margin of a chain of small lakes, — and now again ascending another bridle-way, among hills covered with a stool of stunted wood, — the elegant spectators of these savage regions, while they exhausted every phrase of admiration which Thomson or Delille had supplied, began to exhibit symptoms of impatience and weariness; and to express wishes for the termination of the expedition, which were still disappointed and delayed. The General held up his repeater and touched the spring, as a warning to the party: it struck four. The guide, a gamekeeper attached to the establishment at the Heaths, was again and again interrogated as to their position. Did he see the lodge? In which direction did it lie? How far was it off? etc. etc. etc., to all which he replied as he could: „Och, you can see it, my lady, if yez were on the top of that rock there; and saw something very like it a good bit ago, but thinks it was *Cushlanne-a-Haliah*, or the Hag's castle, where th' ould lady scoulded herself to death.

„That must be my aunt Mac Taaf,” whispered Lady Honoria to Miss Macguire.

The guide was then called upon for the story of „the ould lady, and a quarter of an hour was thus beguiled. Lady Honoria, however (who hated parties of pleasure, but liked any thing better than remaining at home and alone), at length called after Lady Knocklofty, who rode in advance, in close conversation with Lord Arranmore.

„Lady K. we must certainly have a shake-down at the Heaths to-night, if indeed we reach the lodge before to-morrow morning.”

„I always intended it,” said Lady Knocklofty, laughing over her shoulder, „and have provided for you all accordingly.”

Every body expressed their surprise, but none their satisfaction at this intelligence.

„*Quelle perfidie!*” exclaimed Lady Honoria. „I hope then, you have provided a compass; and are not without flints and matches, and other necessaries for bivouacking, wherever we may happen to find ourselves at night-fall.”

„I have forgotten nothing,” said Lady Knocklofty: „a cargo of nightcaps and tooth-brushes accompany us; for you know our friend, Lord Charles, like the Dean of St Grellan, is mighty particular who he lends his tooth-brush to, but come, cheer up, you will soon find yourself in a palace in the desert, like the enchanted castle, in *la Belle et la Bête*.”

„*Ma belle, c'était bien bête de se fier à vous,*”

said Lady Honoria, „I, at least, ought to know you better.”

„But look at that sublime view, Honoria! Lord Charles, have you anything like that in Cumberland?”

„Never tried, by Jove; never looked beyond the covers. A grove of fine chimneys, on the sweet, shady side of Pall Mall, for me.”

„How can you be insensible to such scenes?” said Lady Knocklofty. „Good heavens, what a prospect!”

„The prospect of a soup and a sofa,” said Lady Honoria pettishly, „would be the only prospect that could have a charm for me at present.”

„Exactly,” said Lord Charles, „that’s my idea too, Lady Honoria, of the sublime and beautiful.”

„Well, you are earning the enjoyment of both,” said Lady Knocklofty, endeavouring to keep up the spirits of her party, to the level of her own, which were all abroad. „Look at that mass of tremendous rock, all sunshine on one side, and deep obscurity on the other — what a curious effect!”

„I wish I was *on the other*,” said Lady Honoria, „for I am done to a turn, *grillée aux os*; the heat is insupportable; do let us escape from this *côte rôtie*.”

„Well, *courage, mon enfant*, we must be now nearly at our journey’s end! for the last

time I was here, I rode with my lord, and Lord Clanrikard, in two hours and a half from gate to gate; though we went the old road: this is the new line." She then asked the guide, what difference there was in the distance between the two roads?

„Why then I would not take on me to say, my lady," replied the guide, taking off his hat, and wiping his forehead, with a look of some perplexity, as the party now rode up to him, „for never came this new line afore; only, just, it was your ladyship's orders."

„Never!" exclaimed Lady Honoria.

„Never!" repeated the whole party, in various tones of impatience and annoyance.

„No, in troth, never," replied the guide.

„Then," said Lady Honoria, with much ill temper, „we may as well give up the ghost. I'm already in a fever; *je n'en peu plus*, and here, it appears, all resource is cut off."

„The gentlemen affected to laugh; but were not a little perplexed. It was clear that the guide had lost his way, or rather had never known it. There was, however, no alternative, and they continued to follow as he led. Every trace of a road, or even of a path, was now gradually disappearing; and the horses floundered on, though rough masses of rock, rising out of the quaking wamps of a peaty vegetable soil, till the ravine terminated abruptly over one of those deep and desolate

hollows, which resemble the gaping crater of an extinct volcano. A dark, grey pool filled its lowest depths, overshadowed by a semi-circular range of sheltering precipices, whose shaggy points were involved in the electric clouds, they had drawn from the surrounding atmosphere. A narrow stream appeared to unite this sequestered spot to some lake, on the other side of its barren rocks: but neither track, nor man, nor path, nor pass, nor living form, cheered the hopeless prospect — which, clouded by the now lurid and lowering atmosphere, was the very *lascia speranza* of the desolate region.

Every body quitted their horses.

„Here is a pretty *cul de sac*,“ said Lady Honoria, throwing herself on a bank of heather. „Even if we find our way back, we have full four hours' ride, without relief or refreshment.”

Lady Knocklofty and Miss Macguire took their places beside her: and the grooms led the horses to a natural basin of water, dripping from the rocks; while the gentlemen took the guide a little in advance (to free themselves from the embarrassment of the ladies' questions and complaints), and entered on a consultation. But the guide had lost all presence of mind in losing his way. His intelligence all depended upon the sensible objects, with which it was associated; and of these he had lost

sight, after the first hour of their journey. He had, in fact, taken a totally different road from that recently laid down by Lord Knocklofty's engineer, the precursor of one, to whose talents and industry the regions of Connemara are now so deeply indebted.*

While others were consulting and conjecturing, Lord Arranmore, to whom these regions were familiar, and by whom such obstacles had often been encountered, substituted experiment for inference, and separating from the party, in quest of some means of escape from the embarrassments in which they were involved, he caught the figure of a lonely fisherman who was throwing out his line from a little canoe, in the depths below. He resolved therefore to descent the precipice, and obtain such information as this probably native inhabitant of the region could best give them. The steep was not without danger: but his confidence in his own agility, address, and well practised activity, was authorized by similar feats, performed in similar difficulties. He had already begun his descent from cliff to cliff, and from point to point, when, as he paused upon a slippery and rapid descent, almost apprehensive to proceed further, a loud, wild blast, from a mountain horn, called forth a thousand echoes from the rocks. It was the warning tone, which in such notes, had often

* H. Nimmo, Esq.

checked the reckless temerity of his boyish enterprises, and had of late so frequently sounded in moments of exigency and peril.

He threw up his eyes, and perceived a figure perched on the pinnacle of a rock over the heads of the party he had left, who were sheltering from the sun under its beetling shadows. A form more appropriate to the region could scarcely be imagined, than this image of „the giant Danger,“ bestriding the toppling cliff, of which its rugged and boldly defined limbs seemed a part.

Lord Arranmore again ascended, in the assurance that a guide was at hand, and that his good or evil genius still followed his steps. In his ascent he perceived a pathway up the rocks, which had hitherto escaped his notice, and that of the party: and though the figure of Shane had vanished, like a wreath of mountain vapour, still as the path led to the spot where he had disappeared, Lord Arranmore pursued it; and suddenly found himself upon the smooth summit of a table-mountain, which commanded a view, contrasting with that from which he had ascended, to an extent only to be met with in those altitudes, where nature seems relieved from her own laws, and sports in the wildest and most capricious freedom.

It was a broad and fertile glen, centered by a beautiful lake, and sheltered on all sides, save one, by hills and rocks of various forms

and tints, to which the receding and ruder mountains formed a back-ground. The clouds, which had obscured the other and steeper side of the acclivity, were here broken into fleecy vapours; and the sun poured a full flood of yellow radiance, tinging every hill and hollow, pool and torrent, and brightening the clustered walls and picturesque chimneys of a pile, which (half in ruin, half in preservation) lay along the edge of the lake. It was manifestly one of those relics of ecclesiastical architecture which, rude as they may be, are still in Ireland so superior to every other monument of antiquity. The lake confounded its waters with an inlet of the sea, which, like many others, indenting this coast, run in a long and narrow channel between the hills. On the brow of one of these hills, appeared a cluster of cottages, surrounded by symptoms of verdure and cultivation; while a mill, turned by a mountain torrent, intimated some considerable progress in industry, and civilization, very little to be expected in a region so remote. Several figures were seen moving from various directions upon one point, and that point was the fabric which commanded the whole.

A transition so immediate, from wild and boundless sterility, to a scene of such repose and loveliness, seemed more the work of magic, than of accident. Lord Arranmore gazed in emotion; and for a moment, perceived not that

the mountain-sheep cropping the scented herbage from the flat on which he stood, were attended by a boy, who lay under the branches of a stunted oak. The boy had, however, been looking upon him, from his first appearance, with a bashful, pleased, and sideling look.

„What old building is that?“ demanded Lord Arranmore, in as much Irish as he could command.

„The Abbey of Moycullen,“ said the child.

„Is it inhabited?“

„Och, yes, by the religious ladies of the Holy Heart.“

A sudden revulsion of the whole frame, brought Lord Arranmore's blood from the heart to the head. The boy, who had now risen, fondly taking his hand, stood looking in his eyes with a glance of recognition.

„You know me?“ said Lord Arranmore, endeavouring to recollect him.

„*Agus the Uasal*, shure.“*

„And your name, my child?“

„Padreen, the son of Emunh-na-Lung. That's my daddy, sure;“ and the boy pointed to a man, who was sculling over the ferry-boat with some passengers, to the other side of the lake. Lord Arranmore now recognized one of the objects of his commiseration at Ardcrow; and he shook the child's hand heartily,

* The Gentleman.

„Your father, then,“ he said, „is the ferryman of this lake, now?“

„Aye, indeed?“ said the boy.

Lord Arranmore paused and gazed. This then was, in all probability, the habitation of one, who, to his imagination, had not appeared like „an inhabitant of earth;“ and to this deep and lonely seclusion, to this fertile, fruitful domain, the church had again found its way, after the lapse and persecution of centuries. For a moment, too deeply interested to think of any thing but the scene before him, and the object with which he believed it to be intimately connected, he forgot those whom he had left behind, as if they had never existed: a shrill whistle from the guide, followed by the repetition of his own name, re-echoed among the nether rocks, brought him back to the remembrance of an association, so little in harmony with the scene of his contemplation. His first feeling was that of a miser, who suddenly discovering a hidden treasure, trembles lest others should follow in his track, and share his prize. He felt no desire to throw his party in the way of the ladies of Moycullen. It seemed a species of sacrilege. He knew not why, — he stopped not to inquire, — yet when the guide, followed by Captain Montague, appeared within a few paces of him, he felt something like embarrassment.

He had been missed, and the party were full of anxiety for his safety. The mountain-horn had called their attention to the spot from which it had sounded; and the pony ridden by Miss Macguire, as if led by the sound, had directed its steps towards the ravine, whose mouth, concealed by brush-wood, afforded a tolerable ascent. The party were toiling up on foot; and the horses, led by the grooms, followed.

The scene, which discovered itself to the gaze of all, produced many exclamations of wonder and admiration. The descent was easy and over a mossy soil; and the guides learned from the shepherd boy, that there was a wheel-way along the edge of the lake, which led to the shore of the Bay, where there was a fishery, and boats which plied to St Grellan, and a bridle track along the strand. This was most welcome information. It raised the spirits and roused the energies of all.

„So,“ said Lady Honoria, „we have only been playing the old part of the King of France and his merry men, first ‘marching up the hill, and then marching down again.’”

„This view,“ said Lady Knocklofty, „is worth all we have suffered. What old building is that on the edge of the lake?”

„It’s what they call it, the Retrate of the Religious Ladies,“ said the guide.

„Then,“ said Lady Honoria, with great

glee, „this is probably the dwelling of the *religieuse* of Bog Moy, who said, if I would take convent fare, — *roba di convento*, she called it — she would be glad to see me. So pray let us row over, and beg her hospitality, for I am famished.“

„By all means,“ said the general. „It will be quite a Mont St Bernard adventure.

„I never saw a nun in all my life, except on the stage,“ said the younger aide-de-camp; „I would give anything to see a real nun.“

„I dare say it will be fun alive,“ said Lord Charles, rubbing his hands.

„We shall come in for a mouthful of vespers, too,“ said Miss Macguire: „this is just the time.“

„And a mouthful of something more substantial, too, I hope,“ said Lady Honoria, „though it be but a hot potatoe.“

Lady Knocklofty objected; she thought it best to get home as fast as they could. What did Lord Arranmore think?

He was quite of her ladyship's opinion. But the question being but to the vote, the no's carried it. The party therefore descended the heights and reached the lake, just as Emunh-na-Lung and one of his sons were putting out from the opposite side. The boat was hailed, and the rower, instantly recognizing his benefactor, sprung on shore, and unmindful of the splendid company which surrounded him, fell

at Lord Arranmore's feet: with all the promptitude of Irish gratitude and its hyperbole, he burst into tears, kissed his hands, and uttered many exclamations of surprise and delight, at so unexpected a meeting.

„Here is a scene!“ said Lady Honoria.

„What does it all mean, Lord Arranmore?“ demanded Lady Knocklofty, in the hope she would be called on for a sensation.

He hastily explained; but the ferryman, full of his own good luck, entered more in detail upon its history, adding, „that nothing but luck had followed him ever since the hour he had met with his honour's goodness; for that shortly after he was visited in his poor cabin, by the superior of the confraterni'y, and the Reverend Mother had taken him into her service, and given the childer plinty of larning, and the ateing and the drinking *goloure*.“

„Then pray row us over to the Reverend Mother,“ said Lady Honoria, stepping into the boat, „for you could not possibly be a fitter object of her charity than we are.“ The rest of the party followed, and Lord Arranmore (last, and least willingly) gave his arm to Lady Knocklofty, who was bored and out of temper. The grooms, under the guidance of the shepherd-boy, took the horses towards the shore; where, at the distance of a mile, was a *tighleana*, or house of reception, opposite to which, stood a second ferry. The boat

then put off; the oars sparkled in the sun-beams; the scene they were approaching came forward, in distinct features, as they advanced, and in less than a quarter of an hour, the party landed.

With a simultaneous expression of surprise and admiration, they paused. The Abbey of Moycullen, after the lapse of ages, still preserved all its beautiful Gothic forms; and, submitting more to the aggressions of time, than of man (though grey and mosscovered, mouldering and decayed), still exhibited a most striking and picturesque exterior. The intricacies of the mountain passes; which led to it by land, had probably saved it from the spoliations of Cromwell's soldiery; though the ferocious fanatics had penetrated into the deepest gorges of the Galway mountains, wherever monastic establishments had held out the lure of plunder.* The curiously-ribbed oak-roof of the church, with its arched and ornamented entrance of the Saxon Gothic, its great window, perfect in its delicate tracery, and recently filled with stained glass, together with its belfry and cloisters, were in the highest preservation; while, lying partly in ruin, were still visible the old refectory, chauntry, and cells of its once opulent community; and

* Not very far from Moycullen, at Aughnanure, twenty-seven priests were put to death by the Cromwellites.

a modern building, which harmonized externally with the rest, had been built by the late Count O'Flaherty, and was now the residence (according to the ferryman, who served as cicerone to the party) of the religious ladies of the Abbey.

As the party advanced from the lake along the greensward that spread before the Abbey church, they halted to examine an escutcheon or lozenge, hanging over the arch of its principal entrance. It represented a woman in the habit of a nun, offering a heart irradiated by a glory to a monk in the vesture of Loyola, with the motto of *In hoc signo vinces*. This singular sign (on which Lady Honoria made observations, which to the pious would have sounded like sacrilege) attracted the eyes of all, and increased the general amazement; for it was understood by none, save Lord Arranmore, who sighed as he gazed at it, when suddenly by the low sweet peal of the flute-stop of an organ, directed every sense to itself. The accidental rising of the dark curtain (dropped before the entrance, as in foreign churches), by the hand of some peasant votarist, gave a transient view of the interior of the church; and the gipsy party, with every other intention in abeyance, passed the *velum* of the temple, and entered the sanctuary.

The perspective was striking. The church, though small, was most characteristic of the

remote times in which it was raised; and the lights which penetrated the fine Gothic window, at its extremity, fell with singular effect on the delicate tracery and pillars. The high altar was richly decorated with all the paraphernalia, which the catholic church has borrowed from the Jewish. The altar-piece was a well-painted illustration of „Suffer little children to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of God:“ and little children, clean and well-dressed, to the number of thirty, were seated, with looks demure and folded hands, round the steps of the altar. A venerable ecclesiastic was celebrating the vesper service before the holy table, while the responses were chaunted by female voices, accompanied by the organ. The chancel was separated from the nave by a screen: the latter was crowded to excess by a congregation of the peasantry; and in the former, with their eyes riveted to the psalter from which they were singing, stood the sisters of the community of the Holy Heart. In the midst, upon a raised chair, sat the Superior, with a superb missal open on the desk before her, on which her folded hands, just escaping from the long and sweeping sleeves of her habit, were laid. Her ample robe and voluminous veil, her pose and air might have well become a *Jeanne de Plaisance*, or other princess of the church, in the sixteenth century, to whom conscious power and the habit of com-

mand had communicated a haughty ease of demeanour, characterising alike the movements and the repose of the possessor. Once, and only once, the Reverend Mother turned her head, and raised her eyes from the missal to which they were directed. It was at the moment when the entrance of the strangers, for whom all had made way, occasioned some slight disturbance. She again, however, let them fall, and remained dignified and motionless until the symphony of the anthem, which closed the service, commenced, when one of the choral sisters replaced her missal with a music-book, bowed the knee, and retired to her stall. The music selected was a *Salve Regina*, whose simple counterpoint was well adapted to the not very educated voices of the choir. One voice, however, in the solo part, was strikingly superior to the rest. It was a *contralto* of the rarest description, rich and clouded, yet less remarkable for its quality than for the highly finished Italian manner of its execution. It was the voice of the Superior: and in its mellow and well modulated tones, was recognized by some of the strangers the voice of the Italian harpist of the castle; while to the one alone to whom it communicated emotions the most mixed and powerful, it produced the full conviction that he again listened to the accents which, even in the land of the Syrens, had taken the prisoned soul, and wrapt it in the Elysium.

The voice ceased. The organ in full *diapason*, commenced a voluntary. The community, preceded by their Superior, departed by a door that opened from the choir into the interior of the edifice. The officiating priest retired into the sacristy, and the sacristan extinguished the wax lights that burned on the altar, and veiled the shrine, and closed the sacred volume. The peasant congregation, each dropping a knee before the high altar, and dipping a finger into the stone vase of holy water, made their exit; and the party from Beauregard still remained leaning against the screen, where they had taken their stand on entering, wholly occupied with sensations of surprise and pleasure.

Released, however, from the silence imposed by the sacred ceremony, they soon broke forth in expressions of amazement and admiration. To the young men, the sisters (a very clumsy set of persons) appeared angels; by the women they were pronounced dowdies, who in ordinary dresses would have been coarse and vulgar. Upon the subject of the Superior, there was a more general agreement: all felt the imposing influence of her dignified and abstracted manner. „As she sat“ (said the gallant old General), „with only her pretty white hands to be seen, she reminded me of the charming portrait of the Abbess of Fontevrault —

Elle avait au bout de ses manches
Une paire de mains si blanches,
Que je voudrais, en vérité,
En avoir été souffleté."

„It is very extraordinary," said Miss Macguire; „but I am persuaded that her voice is that of the Italian harpist at the castle, which threw old Lord Muckcross into such raptures, and which Lady Honoria pronounced to be *le plus bel asthme du monde*."

„I wish we had got a better view of her face," said Lord Charles, „but she shouldered us out very explicitly. Lady Honoria, where is the convent fare you promised us?"

„I saw nothing that resembled my close bonnet acquaintance," said Lady Honoria. „I am afraid she is not of them. But, *coûte qui coûte*, we must try our luck; so, Lady K., send in a message to request leave to view the interior, and trust to Irish hospitality for the rest."

Lady Knocklofty, though least amused and most amazed of her party, declared she would rather suffer any inconvenience, than take so great a liberty with a person of so forbidding a deportment as the Superior.

„Forbidding?" repeated Miss Macguire; „Oh, I assure you that it is only the *tour-nure* of the convent, and is put on and off with the veil and scapular."

„To be sure it is," said Lady Honoria; „you

may trust Kitty Macguire on these points — *elle s'y connaît.*“

At that moment the sister who had played the organ descended from the organ loft, and lady Honoria solicited her attention as she passed, by requesting her to present the Countess of Knocklofty's compliments; when she was stopped short by the sister waving her forefinger before her face (the common movement of Italian negation), and saying, „*Non intendo l'Inglese, signora.*“

„Who speaks Italian here?“ said Lady Honoria.

„Lord Arranmore, you do, of course — come forward and translate for us.“

Lord Arranmore had hitherto remained apart, with his eyes fixed on an altar-piece of a small lateral chapel, in the endeavour to conceal his pre-occupation, by a feigned admiration of a very indifferent work of art. Thus called upon, he turned round; and in spite of every attempted mastery over himself, he coloured to the eyes as he recognized in the organist, the elder of the *Penitenti Rosse* of the fancy ball. Lady Honoria repeated the message, of which he was the interpreter, and the foreign nun immediately retired to deliver it.

„Only think,“ said Lady Honoria, „of their having brought over a foreigner to teach these creatures music? What are the papists driving at?“

„What indeed!” said the General, smiling.
„That Abbess completely realizes my ideas of a dangerous papist.“

„By Jove,” said Lord Charles, „I should like to be of this church militant. That old Father Confessor has a fine time of it.“

Other common-places followed, till one of the sisters returned, and bowing first to the altar, advanced with a slight inclination of her head, her hands folded sanctimoniously before her, and her demure and downcast looks humorously contrasted with her handsome, broad, and very mundane countenance. In a strong brogue she delivered the Reverend Mother's compliments to Lady Knocklofty, inviting the party to partake of such poor refreshment as the place afforded, since there was nothing in the Abbey that was worthy of their inspection. As she spoke, she cast a furtive look at the military, and added, as from herself, with a smile that somewhat deranged the sanctity of her countenance, „It is seldom that the like of ye trouble this place, for few visit it; not all as one, as Mary, John, and Joseph: God be with it!“

As she spoke, she opened the door of the screen, and led the way to the interior.

Inclined as the party were to draw out the discontented sister, *ci-devant* of Mary, John, and Joseph, there was no time left for the mystification; for walking rapidly before them

across a little court, she threw open a door and ushered them into the refectory. It was a plain, low-roofed apartment, lined with bog oak, and lighted by small Gothic windows, and furnished with a suitable simplicity. A long table down the middle of the room, with wooden benches on either side, a reading desk at the further extremity, with a *replica* of the picture of the Holy Heart suspended from it, and a good copy of Raphael's St Cecilia, included the whole of its *mobilier*.

The table was already served by a female domestic in a lay habit; the Italian organist and the sister of Mary, John, and Joseph, doing the honours. The service of the table was remarkable for its homeliness; but the mountain wanderers, who looked forward to potatoes and butter, as the probable fare of an Irish convent, were less surprised by coarse linen and yellow delf, than by delicacies worthy of the *calendrier nutritif*: these were a perigord pie, a *pot de confiture*, some dried fruits, and dessert wine that might have put „*le menu de la table à l'apogée de sa gloire*.“

The party were taken by surprise, and exchanged looks; for the foreign lady not only kept them in check by her presence, but with the sharp and prying glance of a *Sœur Ecoute*, evidently produced the same effect on her Irish sister. Lady Honoria endeavoured, in vain, to discover if her acquaintance of Bog Moy

was of the sisterhood. In answer to her side-wind questions, Sister Bridget replied, that though the community were not yet cloistered (and she laid a strong emphasis on the word) and it was not yet the custom in Ireland to lock up those, whom natural vocation had given voluntarily to God, yet that none of the community went beyond the Abbey grounds, except the Superior, who had the church's leave to go out on its service.

„And what is the Reverend Mother's name?" asked Lady Knocklofty.

„Madame Beavoin O'Flaherty," was the reply.

Lord Arranmore rose from the table, and again seated himself, in obvious perturbation, increased by the fixed and penetrating glances of Lady Knocklofty.

The Italian nun here rose to withdraw, beckoning the communicative Sister Bridget to follow her.

„We should like extremely," said Lady Honoria, perceiving that the Italian understood English (whether she could, or would not speak it), „to have the honour of being presented to the Reverend Mother, and of offering her our acknowledgements for her very hospitable entertainment."

The Italian motioned to her sister to take the message; and Lady Honoria, hastily writing a few complimentary lines on a drawing

card of Captain Montague's, Sister Bridget undertook to deliver a request, in which all present, from various motives, were interested. In a few moments the sister returned, and presented a slip of paper to Lady Honoria, who read as follows: —

„The Reverend Mother, Superior of the community of the Holy Heart, will receive the Countess Knocklofty and her party; but she wishes it to be understood, that in complying with a request, which will by no means repay the curiosity that originates it, the Reverend Mother hopes her acquiescence may be deemed less a precedent than a concession.“

„Humph!“ said Lady Honoria, in a low voice, „there is nothing like the humility of the church. This reminds me of the haughty Abbess of the Carmelites, who shut the door of her convent in the faces of *les Tantes du Roi*, when I was in Paris.“

„Are we to await the pleasure of your superior here, or to follow you, Madam, to the presence?“ demanded Lady Knocklofty, haughtily, much mortified at such want of deference to one, whose consequence she supposed could not be unknown, even in so remote and barbarous a district. The Italian answered by leading the way, and an expressive gesticulation not to be mistaken.

„*Cela passe outre!*“ whispered Lady Honoria.

„Yes,” said Lady Knocklofty, „it is all nonsense, and we had better go at once; I am bored to death with this mummary.”

„We are *in for it* now,” said Miss Macguire; „but I dare say it will be good fun, for Sister Bridget is doubtless but a type of Mother O’Flaherty.”

„In this hope the party followed their leader across a small cloistered court, filled with flowers, which the Italian told Lord Arranmore was called the Abbot’s Garden. It led by a low archway into a corridor, which connected the original building with the additions made by Count O’Flaherty. It had been painted in *fresco*, with subjects but little suited to its present purpose: they were evidently taken from the heathen mythology, and represented, among other subjects, the sacrifice of Iphigenia — the altar, the priest, the victim, and her sudden „translation to the skies; with such accompaniment of Zephyrs and Cupids, as indicated that something more was meant, than met the eye. A counterpart, representing Europa crossing the Hellespont, was separated from it by vases, dancing figures, and arabesques, which likewise ran beneath the frieze, and along the corners of the walls.

„The thing,” said Lady Honoria, pausing, „is not only ‘rich and rare,’ but one wonders how the — hem! — it got there.”

„These are the representations, painted by

the naughty count, which the Archdeacon complained of, I suppose," said Lady Knocklofty; „and curious ones they are, for the walls of the retreat of a religious community."

„*Si chiama il torre del Conte*," said the Italian to Lord Arranmore, pointing to an inscription over the door, which terminated this singular gallery. It was,

Amicitiae et Libertati, S.

„Translate for the benefit of the country ladies, my dear General," said Lady Knocklofty, now becoming insensibly interested.

„Sacred to friendship and to liberty," said the General; „a singular motto for the dwelling of one who has abandoned all earthly affections, and resigned her personal freedom, perhaps, for ever."

The opening of the door cut short all further observation. The Italian introduced the visitors as *la Contessa Knocklofty, e la sua società*. For a moment the party forgot their high airs of superiority and habitual tendency to mystify all that were not of their own set. Startled by the appearance of every thing around them, and most by the occupant of the singular and elegant apartment, they stood for a moment; with that expression of constraint, which marks an involuntary subjugation to an unexpected and imposing exterior. The apartment was the *rez de chaussée* of an octagon tower; and it opened by its windows on one

of the lesser lakes, which formed a chain with the greater, and escaped into the recesses of the wooded mountains, behind the Abbey.

Its walls were of one of those colourless colours, which are so well adapted to give relief to the paintings which decorated them. These were portraits of the *mothers* of the church, or saintly women of all ages, set in massive frames of finely carved oak. The furniture, though sombre in its hues, was luxuriously contrived. The fauteuil, on which the Abbess reclined, and the table that stood before her, were pictures in themselves. Whoever had seen the splendid portrait of Pope Julius II. by Raphael, would at once have recognized the original of these close and picturesque imitations in the *accessoires* of that wonderful production. The lady was seated at an open casement. Her table was piled with volumes richly bound, one of which lay open before her; and from the implements scattered about, she appeared to have been painting in it. A finely carved ebony crucifix stood before her. Her dress was a religious habit, with ample sleeves to the wrist, and confined by a girdle beneath the bust. The folds of her veil and *sogolo* were so arranged, as to give a strong resemblance of the bust of the *Vestale* in the Capitol.

Her countenance was rich in expression, passionate and intellectual, even in repose; it resembled the female heads of Correggio.

Her features were mobile and full of play, and her complexion was of that tint, only found in Italy, — pale, but not fair; and of that polish, peculiar to the skins of southern regions. Her eyes were Irish eyes, large, grey, deep set, and fringed, and arched by long, dark lashes and brows; the extreme whiteness of the muslin round her face, formed a striking contrast to tints so mellow, and traits so marked. A slight flush passed across her transparent cheek, as she rose to receive her fashionable visitors; and her smile, displacing the almost awful gravity of her look, at the entrance of her guests, exhibited perhaps something too much of her white and regular teeth, and gave an almost fearful expression to her countenance. It was a beautiful smile, but too acute, and seemed to indicate a spirit that „o'er informed its tenement of clay.” Her real, or affected dignity, put even the effrontery of Lady Knocklofty and Lady Honoria out of countenance. Though they had entered *armées de toute pièce* from that exhaustless dépôt, their habitual assurance, yet conventional insolence, shrank before the natural influence of evident intellectual superiority; and when she motioned them to a sofa opposite to her, they took their places with some little embarrassment. The gentlemen sat, or stood, as they pleased: the general and his aides-de-camp at an open window, Lord Charles

on the arm of the sofa, and Lord Arranmore behind Lady Knocklofty, and leaning over its back.

„I fear,” said Lady Knocklofty, recovering her *air prononcé*, „that we intrude on you; but our natural desire to see a person so celebrated, must be our excuse.”

„Celebrated!” interrupted the lady, coldly; „I did not suspect I was even *known*; this remote solitude is not much adapted to bestow celebrity!”

„At least,” said Lady Honoria, coming to her friend’s assistance, „our desire to see one so worthy to be celebrated, a person so distinguished.”

„Distinguished!” repeated the Reverend Mother, opening her large eyes, with a look and tone so *naïve*, that is *naïveté* might almost pass for knavery.

„Is it not a distinction?” said Lady Honoria, a little posed how to proceed, „to have the courage — the devotion, to retire to ‘these dark solitudes and awful cells,’ with endowments every way qualified to adorn and to enjoy society! With such musical talents alone, with such a voice, you might aspire to — ”

„To be a *seconda donna*,” interrupted the Superior, „in some provincial opera in Italy, with a salary of ten *lire* a night; or to obtain the patronage of some great London lady, till I sang myself out of fashion; and then share

the fate of so many others; *fêtée* to-day, far beyond my merits, forgotten to-morrow, far below my deserts; or perhaps I might even make my way to the Irish capital, and be called upon for a hunting song, in the midst of a bravura, or be interrupted in a concerto on the harp to play magical music, and symphonize 'Hunt the slipper,' or 'Puss in the corner.'"

Every body started, some smiled, and looks of intelligence and surprise were mutually exchanged.

„Oh! you doubt the fact," continued the Reverend Mother, in the same strain of irony. „A friend of mine, however, was thus used, who brought *her* endowments to adorn the society of Dublin, and had hoped to make her fortune in that 'land of song,' which has taken a harp for its arms; but she saw at once the fallacy of her hopes, and resigned them."

„But you, Madam," said the courteous General, approaching the table, and throwing his eyes over a beautiful illumination she was painting on a leaf of a missal, „you at least could fear no failure; such talents must command success every where, as well as deserve it;" and he added, with the air of one who announced a discovery, „talent, like knowledge, is power."

„Talent is only available when seconded by the *prestige* of fashion," replied the Superior, coldly; „knowledge may be power, in

nations, but wealth is the power of individuals. Those," she added, throwing herself back in her fauteuil, „whose endowments are of the highest caste, and who have not their age along with them, will find their knowledge not power, but impediment; and they will be soon taught that the light thrown upon a society, which is not prepared to reflect it, serves but to consume the spirit that kindles it. 'Tis the bursting of a rocket, before it is launched; but the world is governed by common-places."

Every body remained silent, while, as if to fill up the awkwardness of the pause, the Superior, turning to Lady Knocklofty, observed,

„I cannot imagine how your Ladyship and your party, got into that line of mountain, which led you down upon this glen. There is an old pass, recently repaired and opened, which leads down by the coast, to the town of St Grellan: likewise it is a short and beautiful sail from Beauregard to the inlet, which communicates with our lakes, and by which you might penetrate into our hills, with the aid of burlings and corricles (the native means of navigating the shallows, and passing the rapids of this romanctic solitude), that is, if *toutefois* your object be to visit the wilds of Connemara, so rarely sought by such wanderers."

„Our object," said Lady Honoria, whose

brilliant flippancy yielded to the superior influence of one, who sat like an intelligence in the midst of inferior agents; „our object here, Madam, has been most agreeably disappointed. We set forth to take an early dinner *au bout du banc*, at a sporting lodge of Lord Knocklofty's, called the Heaths; but our guide having misguided us, we have been thrown upon your hospitality, for a refreshment, that was becoming very necessary indeed: and we have been equally delighted with all we have seen and heard, for which, in the name of the party, I beg to offer our best thanks.”

The lady bowed slightly, and coldly observed, „There is nothing to see or hear in this lonely and rude retreat, to repay so much fatigue as you must have encountered. I once rode over these mountains; they are terrible in their little way, even after the Alps and Appennines, for they are much less accommodated; but the *Heaths* lie more towards Lough Corrib; you can see the belfry of the office, from a terrace which I have cut on one of those shelving hills on the other side of this little lake; and you can reach it still,” she said, looking at a time-piece, that lay on the table, „before sunset. You shall have a guide to conduct you, and the bridle way is much better than any you have passed.”

„A broad hint,” whispered Lady Knocklofty to Lady Honoria; for though her imagination

lent itself freely to this singular scene and person, she was still impatient, and distressed at the whole adventure, and added, „pray let us be off.”

„However intricate the ways we have come,” said Captain Montague, who, with the rest of the gentlemen, made an attempt to move, „I fear we shall find it more difficult to get away, than we did to arrive.”

„We must make the effort, however,” said Lady Knocklofty petulantly, „for we cannot intrude longer on this lady, whose time is doubtless precious, as well as sacred,” and she rose as she spoke.

Every one now of necessity arose: the Superior rose also, and observed,

„Time here is indeed *argent comptant*. Like other new colonists in barbarous regions, our labour is the currency by which we live,”

„There is nothing very *barbarous* here, however,” said Miss Macguire. „This beautiful apartment reminds me of the Abbesses’ *parloirs* in the great convents of France. May I beg to know of what order is this convent?”

„We are a confraternity of no particular religious order: we are at least, as yet, subject to no rules; but are one of those religious societies so common in Italy, and particularly in Florence — a sort of *demi-religieuses*,” she added, smiling.

„Macchiavel,” said Lord Arranmore, in a

pointed manner, and now for the first time giving signs of life, „Macchiavel was a member of one of those *nameless* orders, I believe.”

„So I have read,” said the Abbess, throwing down her eyes, and colouring slightly at the abruptness of the observation. „Macchiavel was a worthy and a pious man; but acted and wrote under peculiar circumstances, and with views wholly mistaken or misinterpreted.”

„Then,” said Lady Honoria, always ready to go out of her way, to say a smart thing, though rarely saying „a wise one,” „we may apply to your catholic communities, what the Irish traveller said of Spain — *point de religion, et beaucoup de dévotion.*”

„Which is the reverse of what may be said of your protestant communities, Madam,” said the Abbess — „*Point de dévotion, et beaucoup de religion.*”

Every body laughed, and Lady Honoria, more accustomed to be laughed with than to be laughed at, said, petulantly, „I assure you we Irish protestants are deficient in neither: the proof is, that we are daily making converts from your infallible church. Here, for example, is our last conquest; you will allow we have reason to be proud of it,” and she drew forward Miss Macguire, by no means pleased at being thus distinguished for her apostacy.

„Yes,” said the Superior, fixing her penetrating eyes upon the convert, „if you are

sure of it. But there is something so papistical in the expression of that young lady's face (for, trust me, religions have their physiognomies), that I suspect she is like Fra Paolo, *catholic en gros, et protestante en détail.*"

Miss Macguire blushed deeper than she had done for the last half of her life; and the General evidently infatuated with the Reverend Mother, observed, „You are a dangerous person, Madam, if you read faces thus, *à livre ouvert.*“

„Rosalba,“ she replied, „learned to know characters from her constant study of countenances, *‘ed anch’ io son pittore.*”

„So I perceive,“ said the General, „and a very charming one, too. I presume these pictures are from your easel; they have the true character of the Italian school. Are they original, or copies?”

„Copies” (was the reply) „from Montegna, Da Vinci, and Raphael; the last, I think, who painted pious women, because, about that time, the agency of such spirits ceased to be in demand.”

„The fashion, however, may be revived,” said Lord Arranmore, with the emphasis of one who spoke under some strong or acrimonious feeling, „and with the effect, which the subtlety of female agency has always produced.”

„By Jove! if all pious women were as pretty as these,” said Lord Charles, looking round him, „a charming fashion it would be: I would be a monk myself. I say, General, look at that lovely creature, with the angel touching her with an arrow tipped with flame; there is nothing in the Windsor gallery like that. Look, Lady K., is it not like the Duchess?”

„I am no judge of pictures,” said Lady Knocklofty, who had moved towards the door, in vain; for every one had gathered before the beautiful portrait, which as a close and admirable copy, was well worth their attention.

„That is a copy of the famous St Teresa, at Genoa. The master is disputed. It is so inferior to the original, you cannot judge of the merit of the composition,” said the fair artist.

„I never saw a saint with eyes so like a sinner,” said Lord Charles.

„And yet she *was* a saint,” said the Superior, gravely: „the church owed her much.”

„The church has owed such women everything,” said Lord Arranmore, vehemently; „and Dante’s apostrophe of ‘*Ahi, Constantino,*’ should have been addressed to Helena, rather than to her imperial husband.”

„Faith has always been upheld by sacrifice; and who is so fit to make it as woman?” demanded the Superior, turning her fine eyes, for

the first time, on him who made the observation.

„Faith may also be upheld by imposition,” said Lord Arranmore, pointedly. „It is well known that this St Teresa was an agent of the pope's, whose councils she considerably influenced.”

„She was a chosen vessel of the church,” said the Superior, dropping all that was mundane in her look and manner, and folding her hands on her bosom, „to forward the salvation of her erring children.”

„She was a chosen instrument to forward a system, injurious alike to the liberties and happiness of mankind,” said Lord Arranmore, with more acrimony than the subject demanded.

„And well chosen, too,” said the General, „if she was as lovely as that picture represents her, —

From lips like those what precepts fail to move?”

„Her beauty is on record,” said Lord Arranmore, pointedly; „it was perfect; and her versatile talents may be estimated by their effect, at a time when the monastic system was breaking up. She was sent forth armed by the church, and by her own peculiar powers, for the mission; and quitting her luxurious convent of Mount Carmel, she contrived to submit thirteen great monasteries to her re-form, till her reputation was carried beyond

the bounds of christian Europe. Her writings are still but too popular in Italy."

„She was an author, too?" asked the General.

„Many extraordinary works are attributed to her," said Lord Arranmore. „Her *Action de grâce* is full of grace; and her *Chemin de perfection* is written in a manner very little calculated to answer the end it proposes; while her hymns are worthy of Sappho."

„There is one sentiment, at least," said the *religieuse*, with the meek manner of one accustomed to stand the brunt of such attacks, „which may plead her cause with souls as sensible as her own — and that is *oïhmè! quanto son infelicissimi i dannati, non possono amare*."* She raised her eyes as she spoke, with a supplicating softness, as if to deprecate the critical severity, which had been so unsparingly directed against her favourite saint; and then let them fall beneath the shadow of their long lashes. In this look was concentrated all the intelligence „which soul to soul affordeth," when words are denied.

Lord Arranmore turned away, and muttered between his teeth unconsciously, „The Jesuitess!" then pausing before another picture, he said; „here is a saint of another style."

* Alas! how unhappy are the damned; they cannot love.

„Yes,” said the Superior, mistaking, or affecting to mistake his meaning, „’tis an attempt at the manner of old Montegna, as you, General, will perceive, by the formality of the figure and the golden ground: it is St Catherine of Siena.”

„It is a most faithful imitation of that school,” said the General, much flattered by her reference to his judgment; „what, pray, was the vocation of this shrewd looking saint?”

„Her mission,” said the Superior, „was one of great activity, and belonged more to this world than the next. It was she who made up the breach between the Florentines and Pope Gregory the Eleventh. It was she who removed the chair of St Peter from Avignon to Rome, and brought back the truant pontiff from the shores of the Rhone to the Tiber. It was she who gave the victory to the Urbanites over the Clementines; and by prayer and preaching brought over all Italy to the cause of her favourite pope.”

„By prayer and preaching!” returned Lord Arranmore, „say rather by her perfect beauty and consummate art. She was educated for the mission she so ably filled, and her natural eloquence and energy did the rest.”

„Lord Arranmore,” said Lady Knocklofty (who, „patience perforce,” had again resumed her seat on the sofa), „it appears that you are wonderfully well read in the lives of the saints.”

„The study, Madam, made part of my college course abroad, and came in under the head of divinity.”

„And a very proper head to come under,” said the gallant General, „if the dead saints were as divine as the living,” and he looked full at the superior, who either did not make, or did not chuse to acknowledge the application.

She was occupied in showing a small and beautiful portrait on ivory to the two young men and Lady Honoria. The subject was dressed much in the same habit as she herself wore; and the countenance, like hers, was more remarkable for its brilliant intelligence than its sanctity.

„Now,” said Lady Honoria, „in spite of the veil and rosary, that was a most mundane creature, or I am much mistaken. If coquetry had ever been canonized, I should say *la voilà*.”

„It was one,” said the Abbess, „accused of having more spirit than grace, and it was said of her, *qu'elle avait de tous les genres d'esprit*. When this miniature was painted, she was a nun in the Monastery of St Fleuri. It hangs here more for its value as a work of art, than from any estimation of the original; for the nun of St Fleuri broke the vows, forced on the helplessness of her youth; and returned to a world, to which her genius was more

adapted, than to the seclusion of a monastery : it is the portrait of the famous Madame de Tencin."

„And yet," said Lord Arranmore, „this arch-intrigante of the most intriguing times, this *femme d'état*, would in other times have respected her vows, and yet have fulfilled her natural vocation; and as the agent and adjunct of popes and cardinals, she would have carried on a system which, in all times, has been best carried on by the subtlety of woman. In the fourteenth century, she would have been a Catherine of Siena; in the fifteenth a Saint Teresa; and in the present age she *might* have made an abortive effort, to restore a system, which does not belong to it."

„She had one merit at least," said the superior, meekly; „she was capable of great devotedness. Her friendship knew no obstacles, acknowledged no impossibility, when to serve or to save, to rescue or redeem the object of her partiality or protection, was in question."

„Her protection!" muttered Lord Arranmore, with bitterness.

„Say no more, my dear Madam," said the general, „or, all protestant as I am, I shall fall before the shrine of this mundane saint, and worship her image,"

„I never saw a more equivocal countenance," said Lady Knocklofty; „it has the look of a handsome imp."

She rose as she spoke. Her patience and temper were now alike exhausted; with that quickness, which renders woman, where her most powerful passions are concerned, omniscient, she had detected the sudden pre-occupation, and total change of manners, of Lord Arranmore, from the moment they had passed the curtain at the church door. His relaxed attentions to herself, his frequent change of colour and countenance, his piqued and pointed manner, when addressing the Superior, and his intense inquiring eye, as he gazed on her, evinced that this was not their first interview; and from this inference, a thousand painful and mortifying conclusions followed. Whatever was the nature of her partiality for one, whose character and condition were at such variance with her own position, whether it was the caprice of an unregulated imagination, or of a passion still less defensible — he had long occupied her thoughts; and for the last few days his presence and society had given interest to a mode of life she detested, and rendered the solitudes of Beauregard, not only endurable, but delightful. Now, however, making an effort at self command, she tapped the General on the shoulder, and observed, „Come General, lest we should lose the most agreeable sinner in the world, I must tear you from the saints: I perceive the Reverend Mother is bent upon your conversion, and I have no

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doubt that what she undertakes, she will perform."

„*Je ne demande pas mieux*," said the General, drawing up, and looking as alert as fifty years „*bien sonnées*" would let him.

„Saint Ignatius was a soldier," said the Abbess, with grave simplicity.

„Yes," said the General; „but if I remain here much longer, I must belong to the army of martyrs; and as that is a service for which I have no vocation, I shall seek safety in flight. I am ready to attend your Ladyship," and he turned with a sigh to Lady Knocklofty.

Every body smiled at this *malentendu*, except the person to whom it was addressed; whose compressed lips, and knitted brows, but ill assorted with any expression of amusement. She turned shortly on the Superior, and rather bowed, than spoke her acknowledgments. The party then took their leave; and the Reverend Mother, resuming her dignified air, which had evidently been laid aside, for a conventional meekness, whenever religion came in question, accompanied the visitors to the extremity of the corridor. There they were received by the Italian sister, who conducted them back through the church. A boat with four oars, that resembled a pleasure barge, now neared the shore, for their reception. The party were soon seated, under an awning which had been spread against the ardour of

the evening sun, and were launched on the placid bosom of the breathless lake.

„Well, this has been an adventure,” said Miss Macguire, „worth all we have endured to come at it. It was quite delightful,”

„I am quite of another opinion,” said Lady Knocklofty, sulkily.

The men however all agreed with Miss Macguire, and were loud in their commendations. Lord Arranmore alone excepted, who had taken an oar, and was plying it with energy, by no means called for by the occasion. Each now pronounced an eulogium upon their hostess, after their own peculiar way; but it was evident that her habit and singular manner had gone for as much as her personal attractions and intelligence.

„What do you think of her, Honoria?” asked Lady Knocklofty, abruptly.

„Why, as Madame de Sévigné says of somebody, *‘c’est la plus belle vocation pour la coquetterie.’*”

„Exactly,” said Lady Knocklofty, with a petulant laugh, you have hit off the *Reverend Mother* to admiration. Lord Knocklofty will be a little surprised to learn, what sort of a community he has got in his neighbourhood. This is a very different thing from the poor slovenly daudles of the St Grellan convent.”

„I am convinced, Lord Arranmore,” said Lady Honoria, „she is the very person in the

close bonnet, I met at your aunts'; but as she did not seem willing to acknowledge the acquaintance, good breeding forbade my recalling it."

"Did good breeding forbid you also from acknowledging the acquaintance, Lord Arranmore?" asked Lady Knocklofty, significantly; "or were *you* too cut by this reverend lady? for it struck me that this visitor at Bog Moy was not so totally a stranger to you."

Lord Arranmore, taken off his guard by the suddenness of the question, answered with some embarrassment: "I really don't know: that is, I think, with Lady Honoria, that the Superior, and the lady with whom I chatted for a few minutes at my aunts', may be one and the same person."

"Come," said Lord Charles, laughing, "you are pushing him too hard. See how he blushes, 'celestial rosy red;' as Miss Roistrum said of my new uniform. I say, Arranmore, when next you go to the Abbey to confession, take me along with you: as I am no epicure, Sister Bridget will answer me, for a little pious flirtation."

Here the boat reached the shore; and the ladies, impatient to be off, ordered their horses. One, however, was "reported absent without leave," as the young aide-de-camp announced it. It was Lord Arranmore's pony, which had strayed away; "But," said the host of the

Shebeen, „it will soon be found, and restored safe and sound to the owner, if it was gold.” What was remarkable in this event, was, that the saddle had not strayed with the animal, but was found lying in the shed, which was dignified with the name of stable. It was remarked, however, that the saddle was much too large, and that the pony might easily have gotten rid of it.

The difficulty thus created was not easily surmounted; and Lord Arranmore, who insisted on giving up the mare he rode to Miss Macguire, was compelled to await the tide, and return himself by boat.

„We shall wait supper for you,” said Lady Honoria; while Lady Knocklofty scarcely returned his bow, as she rode off.

„I shall not fail,” was the reply made with the most absent air.

„Honoria” (said Lady Knocklofty, as the two friends rode side by side), „’tis all over. There ends my dream, like so many others.”

„Why, child, if a dream can amuse you, what prevents you from dreaming on?”

„You see what I mean, I perceive,” said Lady Knocklofty, with a deep sigh.

„Oh! yes,” replied Lady Honoria, laughing: „*le sage entend à demi-mot*. You suspect that this Abbess is an acquaintance, of some sort or other, of Lord Arranmore’s?”

„And what do you think — you who are so observing?”

„That there was evidently some intelligence between them — that he was piqued — and that she was coquetting with her saintly eyes and sinful smile. But an old love is the safest of all loves: besides, you have amused yourself up to your bent with your Orlando; who, in spite of his patriotism, is on the high road to be desperately in love with you.”

„Yes, *on the high road*,” said Lady Knocklofty, shaking her head; „he was, I believe, *déterré*! but it is nothing to start such game, if one does not run it fairly down.”

„Well and you have run it down.”

„No,” said Lady Knocklofty, „far from it: yet it was royal sport too while it lasted.”

„Why it was a *heart* (hart) to be sure,” said Lady Honoria, „and therefore *royal sport*, if you will; but any bush, if beaten, may turn out as good game.”

„No,” said Lady Knocklofty, „there is nothing like him —

Natura il fece, e poi ruppe la stampa,”

„What! has he taught you Italian already?” said Lady Honoria, laughing. „You have been an apt scholar.”

„I made him teach me that line, which he applied to Shakspeare, but which is equally applicable to himself.”

„If you have come to books and Italian, your case is desperate; *cela sent la grande*

passion, instead of an innocent flirtation, to get rid of a wet day in the country. You make me tremble, child. How can you be *fresh*? Is this the way you 'make sport withal?' "

Here the gentlemen rode up, and the broad, strand road, permitting the party to ride abreast, the conversation became general. Without further adventure, the amused but wearied wanderers arrived at Beauregard.

CHAPTER V.

THE INTERVIEW.

LORD ARRANMORE stood on the beach, as the party from which he was now so unexpectedly released rode away. He had impatiently watched the fading of their shadows from the pebbly shore, as they departed; and when a sudden turn in the cliffs concealed them from his view, he breathed with a long and deep drawn respiration, as one who was released by their absence. Eager for silence and solitude, he turned away from the little creek, where a party of fishermen had just entered, for fresh water. He was well aware that at any moment a boat might be procured; and he turned back upon his steps, and walked rapidly up a ravine along the lake.

His noble and most sovereign reason
Like sweet bells, jangled out of tune,

was a chaos of perturbation. — The dream of his thoughts — the spirit of his adventures the destiny that had linked itself to him, and, in voice and form, in passing glances and partial revelations, had pursued him, from the choir of the Gesù Bambino, to the pavilions of the Borghese palace — from the saloons

of the castle, to the fallen ruins of O'Brien's house — from the caves of Cong, to the smoky chambers of Bog Moy — had now been manifested to him, in the palpable form of a young and beautiful woman! — of a woman, however, veiled and vowed to a religion, to which it was possible that her ambition and her prejudices were alike devoted.

When he thus detected in the Superior of an obscure Irish convent, the influential member of a powerful community at Rome, — when he detected in the sister Irene (the foundress of a new *culte*, and the well known agent of the Jesuits at Florence) an Irishwoman, his amazement was mingled with something of national pride. But other and remoter considerations all faded, before the conviction, that this gifted, powerful, lovely person had been long interested and occupied with himself and his wayward fortunes. To what purpose, — for what object, — or to what end, he resolved to learn from her own lips, in an immediate interview. With passions

— that, like the Pontic sea,
Ne'er knew retiring ebb, —

with a vehemence of temper that had led to all the good or ill of his short but chequered life, he was still impelled on; and he paused not to reflect. To feel and to act, had been the habit of his life; and piqued by the indis-

criminating indifference, with which the Superior had received him, in common with his very common-place associates, — annoyed by the insidious meekness, with which she had appealed to him, in behalf of those women, who like herself had acted a part through life (thus treating him as a dupe, and probably considering him one), he resolved to oppose the intrepidity of frankness to the mystery of intrigue; and to demand the explanation of a conduct, into which he had a right to inquire, since it had influenced his own peace, and interfered with his actions. Firm of purpose, he was yet undecided as to the moment for putting it into execution. His petulance and ardour led him at once back to the Abbey, to the octagon tower, to the cell of the sorceress, where, surrounded by the implements of her arts, she appeared more dangerous in her dignified grace and sanctimonious reserve, than she had even been in the brilliancy of her wit at Proudfort House, or in the playfulness of her fantastic character in the garden of the Borghese. But that he should obtain admission to her presence at that moment was more than doubtful; and would necessitate a breach of his engagement at Beauregard. He sighed, from his inmost soul, the deep sobbing sigh of remorse, of regret, that he had ever entered that Alcina's palace, — the first, the solitary event in his life, which had committed

his principles, and impaired his self-respect. Still the feelings of a kind — (and he blushed to think how kind) — of a confiding woman, were at stake. He had but too well observed that he had already awakened those suspicions, which place the tender and susceptible on the rack of doubt. And for whom was he to wound this warmhearted, imprudent, but generous woman? For one who was upholding a system he detested, and who, if not an impostor, was at least a dupe; — while Lady Knocklofty was simply, and only — a woman! To return instantly, and for the last time, to Beauregard, was therefore a resolve, to which he had painfully come, at the moment when he had reached a point, that gave a full view of Moycullen Abbey.

Beguiled by thoughts as hurried as his steps, he had wandered to the ferry, which the party had first crossed, under the guidance of Emunh na Lung. The sun had already sunk beneath the horizon, leaving a yellow flush upon the remote line of the distant sea; and tinging the summits of the mountains, with tints, that vanished while they were looked upon. Every line, and point, and arch, and gate of the Abbey was sketched upon the stilly bosom of the lake. The breathless air fanned no leaf, nor bent the reed which feathered the water's edge. The boat-house had been deserted and shut up; the boat (fastened by a rope to the

stump of a tree) had no undulation. The solitary but agitated spectator of this scene of peace stood with folded arms, the moral contrast of its material tranquillity. He gazed wistfully, with thoughts suspended between desire and resolve, and still hesitated in all the torment of indecision. The light insensibly faded, and the shadows lengthened, forms mellowed into mists, and mists to darkness, and solitude itself looked more solitary; until the moon, rising majestically, gave a new character to the scene, of which the idealism was singularly augmented by the tones of a harp, which came floating over the silent waters, as soft and silvery as the pure light of which they seemed the harbingers. Their „sole auditor” hesitated no longer. The tones of the harp breathed on his excited senses, like

No sound that the earth owns;
and obeying their almost supernatural solicitings, he resolved on seeking out, at once,

The Goddess on whom those airs attend;
and eagerly and tremblingly, he uncoiled the rope of the ferry boat, sprung into it, and pushed off for the opposite shore.

At that moment, the melancholy winding of Shane's horn came floating down from the heights, from beneath which the boat had just escaped. Lord Arranmore looked up in the direction whence the sound proceeded, and

beheld the dark outline of a human figure, standing on the point of the rock above. For once, however, the warning sound had lost its influence. Whatever peril now awaited him, he scoffed at. A mind energized by passion, an imagination heated by excitement, an habitual love of adventure, an impatience of mystery, and above all, a secret infatuation, beyond what the senses can awaken (which, to himself, was operating with increasing intensity, in favour of the extraordinary person, into whose presence accident had at last so strangely led him) — all conspired to impel him to his purpose.

He was already on the further shore, and had drawn up his boat. The sounds of the harp had died away; the moon was clouded, and the Abbey, in the repose and majesty of its silent ruins, looked the very sanctuary of holy and innocent sequestration. To proceed, he felt was almost sacrilege: he paused for a moment; and then crossing with a noiseless step the dewy grass, he approached, and raised the curtain of the ever open door of the chapel. All within was still and dark, save where before a pictured representation of the Holy Heart, a lamp shed its concentrated light full on the head of St Ignatius, the principal figure in the group. He dropped the curtain and shuddered; and again he hesitated; but urged irresistibly onwards, he passed before the

façade of the antiquated pile; and doubling the angle formed by the transept of the church, encountered an iron railing, which separated that part of the Abbey, at all hours accessible to the public, from the building erected by Count O'Flaherty, and now the habitation of the community. By a bound he cleared the barrier, and found himself on a greensward, that dipped into the waters of the lesser lake, and fronted a most irregular building. As yet he had found no door of entrance; no light, no sound, gave guidance to his steps; till as he advanced, a long and tremulous ray, dancing on the water, led him to the spot from which it issued. With steps, slow, silent, and stealthy as those of a midnight murderer, he advanced, and paused, and advanced again. A glass-door, which opened almost on the verge of the lake, discovered, that the light which played upon the waters, proceeded from a lamp standing on a table within. The interior of the apartment lay open to his view; and he perceived the Superior of a community which was already buried in the forgetfulness of sleep, seated between the window and the table, with her head reclined on her arms, and her arms folded upon her harp. Again he paused. He heard the strong beating of his own heart; and the sound but increased its palpitations. Agitated, doubtful for a moment whether to retreat or advance,

he endeavoured, upon the very threshold of his wishes, to collect his thoughts, to subdue his emotion, to arm himself with equanimity and presence of mind, for an interview, thus sought under the most unwarrantable circumstances. He stood at the vestibule of the temple, where this priestess of Jesuitism celebrated her rites, and prepared her illusions. This idea armed him; and treading heavily, to announce his approach, and to prevent the consequences of a sudden alarm, he advanced to the open door.

It was, perhaps, in the confidence of her profound retreat, and the safety of her chosen solitude, that the Superior was rather startled than alarmed at this intrusion. On hearing the approaching footsteps, she merely raised her head, and with a composure of mind, announced by the firmness of her voice, demanded who was there? adding, in a tone of inquiry, „Shane?”

„No, Madam,” said Lord Arranmore, with a voice faltering, in spite of every effort to steady its tones, and uncovering his head, as he inclined it; „No, Madam, it is not Shane; but it is one, as unliked to the great chain of society — it is one as much out of sorts with fate and fortune, who, perhaps inexcusable in his intrusion, thus ventures respectfully to solicit a moment of your attention.”

While he spoke, the lady had risen, and

drawn herself up to the full height of her stature; and with a command over her emotions, if any such had been awakened, she calmly said, in a low, interrogating tone, „Lord Arranmore, I believe?”

„I blush to answer, Madam, to a title so unsupported by all which alone gives such sounds value; but the unfortunate person who now obtrudes himself upon your notice, is Lord Arranmore.”

„The inheritance of a great name,” replied the lady, coldly, „is an awful responsibility, not always acquitted by the adscititious circumstances which accompany it. But it is generally attended by a knowledge of those forms, which good taste, in any rank, never violates. May I beg to know, my lord, the purport of this extraordinary visit, at this unusual hour, and paid in this very indecorous manner?”

She had now advanced; and folding her arms within her long, full sleeves, leaned against the side of the glass door, in an easy and commanding attitude, as one who gave audience to some suppliant rustic, whose interests led him to consult the oracular decisions of his village *suzeraine*.

„I cannot, speak, Madam, while you stand,” he replied.

She resumed her seat, without inviting him to enter; but he advanced, and took the place she had a moment before occupied at the door.

„I feel, Madam,” he continued, „the full impropriety of this intrusion. It is not, however, the result of temerity, but of that necessity, which you once pronounced to be ‘the master of gods and men.’ I stand not here to plead for its fitness, but to demand of you the spring, the secret of those events, which have urged me to a violation of the common forms of society, and placed me in the awkward position in which I now appear before you.”

„You must excuse me, my Lord Arranmore,” said the lady, imperatively. „To whatever your allusions may point, this is not a moment to explain them. I am here, the head of a religious flock: my example is of more consequence than my precepts. Your intrusion here is a flagrant impropriety; to endure it, is to sanction it. Whatever right you may suppose you have to question me (and I admit of none), you must chuse another and a fitter time. I desire you will withdraw.”

„Madame O’Flaherty,” replied Lord Arranmore, (with a decision of manner as peremptory as her own), „for I find that the Sister Irene of the Bambin Gesù, the Nuccia of the Borghese, the Pilgrim of Proudfort House, now chuses to assume the representation of the tender and unfortunate Abbess, who once reigned over these solitudes, and by a name consecrated in the superstitious reverence of

the country — by the name of Beavoin O'Flaherty, to — ”

„To what does all this verbiage lead ?” interrupted the Superior, half rising, in scornful impatience, from her seat. „The name I bear is mine, by every right that birth and inheritance can give. It was my father's name; and has descended to me, from the brave to-parchs of this now neglected region, the last of whom is represented in my person: and now, my lord, this being said, I have only to reiterate my desire, that you will take your leave.”

„Then,” said Lord Arranmore, advancing a step within the room, and heedless of an order evidently less peremptorily announced than the first, — „then you are the daughter and heiress of Count O'Flaherty, from whom this small portion of his inheritance was won by my unfortunate father; — a victory which terminated in the utter ruin, alike of his fortune and his mind.”

His voice was full of emotion. He paused for a moment, and then added with rapidity, „You are not perhaps aware, Madam, that the return made to my father was the seduction of his sister, one as lovely and as gifted as yourself, of one sacrificed on the altar of superstition, a victim to that system which you are here to revive.”

„You would not make me answerable for

my father's sins?" demanded the Superior, now not unmoved by an emotion so infectious.

„No, Madam, but I would awaken some feeling for my father's wrongs."

„In what manner do you call on me to evince it?"

„By showing some sympathy for his son's misfortunes."

„You jest, Lord Arranmore," she replied, with a bitter smile. „The boon companion of the dissipated and the great, the *protégé* of a lady, whose power is absolute, whose will is law; the associate of the despots of the soil and the enemies of Ireland — what can you want from one who belongs to the persecuted and degraded caste? What sympathy can the member of a sect, which has been thrown beyond the pale of all sympathy, grant to the guest of the Earl of Knocklofty, to the *protégé* of his — wife?"

„I am neither the guest of the one, nor the *protégé* of the other," he replied, trembling with angry emotion. „Chance has linked me for a moment with a party, which in prudence, perhaps, I should not have known; and which from inclination, I should never have sought. The accident, however, which formed so unnatural a combination, has dissolved it: the link is severed, and — for ever."

„Your resolve is, doubtless, taken on mature deliberation?" said the Superior, giving

peculiar signification to the question, by the tone and smile with which it was asked.

The blood rushed to Lord Arranmore's face at the implied sarcasm; yet to blame was to be interested, and the conviction encouraged him. He had now, by an insidious progress, so far advanced into the room, as even to lean over the harp, supporting his head upon his hand, with his eyes fixed earnestly on the extraordinary but beautiful countenance before him. After a silent and dangerous pause, he observed, with a faint smile,

„What are the deliberations of man, when a breath, a glance, a tone is sufficient to overturn the deepest and the wisest? Your words, Madam, have effected all that reason should have done, but did not; and my resolve dates no farther back, than your reproach.”

She waved her head expressively, not approvingly.

„Such,” she said, „was the plea, and such the temperament of Count O'Flaherty, with whose faults you have but just reproached his child. Alas! with all his sins, he *was* but what you *are*.”

„And what was that?” demanded Lord Arranmore, eagerly.

„An Irishman,” was the cool reply.

„That, I trust, is not a disgrace?”

There was a sort of ironical hesitation, a humorous play of feature, as the superior re-

plied. „Why — a — perhaps not a disgrace; but it is sometimes almost a ridicule; and it is always a misfortune. With some it is a farce; with others a tragedy, according as the person, on whom so fatal a birth-right is inflicted, is an O'Mealy, or an O'Brien. To be born an Irishman is a dark destiny at the best; the last that the wise would contend with, or the proud encounter. — Here, indeed, as every where, mediocrity is safe; dulness is its own protection, and insensibility its own shield: but genius and feeling, the pride, the hope, the ambition of patriotism, the bitter indignation which spurns at oppression, the generous sympathy which ranges itself on the side of the oppressed, — if there are lands where such virtues thrive and flourish, and force forward the cause of human happiness, Ireland is not one of them. Here virtue is made to turn traitor to itself; and the same passions that rouse the patriot to any sacrifice, urge him into the snares of the profligate. Here the fortitude of long endurance corrupts into obsequiousness; and the spirit of the gallant maddens into lawless intemperance. Here genius is the object of suspicion to dull rulers, and of insult to petty underlings; and all that bends not — falls. Fly, then, Lord Arranmore, for here none like you, have ever lived and thriven. You start at advice so abruptly given, and from one who has so little right

to advise; but I lay aside every personal consideration, to avail myself of this one, this only (but far from prudent), occasion, to warn you for your danger. Trust me, by remaining here, you will but mar the cause you hope to aid. Honest, but indiscreet, gifted with every talent, but that which is necessary to direct all, you will, as others have done, and (I say it in fearful prophecy, are destined still to do) fall a victim, without effecting the good for which you suffer. Nay, Lord Arranmore, you must hear me out; you have hunted the sybil to her cell, and now you must patiently listen to her gloomy oracles. Take the future upon the word of the past. Fly, while you have yet the power: the world is all before you. Every where, talents such as yours will avail, save only at home! Whatever may be your vocation, the pathway of ambition is open to you. In France, your preceptor, the Bishop O'Flaherty, has but to receive and make you known. In Italy, in Spain, your uncle, the Abate O'Brien, is still powerful; Russia wants officers of European intellect, to discipline her Tartar legions; and in Germany, the Prince de Ligne will do for his distinguished aide-de-camp all that influence can effect for talent in that land, where influence is paramount. I do not direct your views to England; but I implore you to leave Ireland, where you cannot do good, but may cause evil. Means shall not

be wanting to send you forth, as becomes your rank — means coming from a hand you have already said you would not reject, — the hand of your nearest living relation, which is now, for the first and for the last time, held out to you in the cordial amity of kindred."

She paused; her countenance irradiated with the animated energy of her awakened spirit, her colour deepened by her obvious emotion she had excited. Lord Arranmore seized the extended hand, and fell at her feet, while, wholly involved in the most powerful feelings, fascinated, bewildered, he pressed it to temples that throbbed with delirious pulsation, to lips that burned like living fire. Madame O'Flaherty rose in confusion, in agitation, and in anger.

"My Lord," she said, "you must go — go this instant. This is not what I expected — what I have deserved. Your extraordinary appearance has anticipated and hurried on intentions, previously conceived: make me not to repent that it has done so. Do not turn an interview of importance to you, to the purposes of mere idle and habitual gallantry. Reserve such flattering insults for Lady Knocklofty, or any other lady of the high Irish autocratic society you frequent, whose manners belong to their system: they neither suit the time, nor place, nor person to whom you have the bad taste to address them. Let go my hand instantly, or — "

She had already taken up the silver bell that stood upon the table near her, but Lord Arranmore snatched it from her.

„Whatever may be the penalty of my disobedience to this imperative command,” he said, with passionate vehemence, „I *will not* comply with it! I am here, by a law superior to your own — all-powerful as you are — by the law of that instinct, which urges every being to inquire into the means by which his happiness is influenced, his actions interfered with, his feelings worked upon, and his destiny taken out of his own hands. You have too long assumed a power, only belonging to Providence itself. Whoever you are, remember, that by assuming protection over me, you give me the rights of the protected. Who are you, that would lay me under obligations, which, if your offers are sincere, as they are extensive, should bind me to you for ever? You have said that the hand so freely given, so fearfully withdrawn, was the hand of my nearest relation. Who and what I am, you but too well know; and thus bending a knee which never bent before to created being, I demand who and what you are? I ask it, in earnest supplication, — I demand it, as a right. And I vow by all that is sacred not to quit this place, or this position, come what may, till you satisfy doubts, and lay suspicions, that have become the torment and occupation of my life.”

All the equanimity, the presence of mind possessed, or dignity assumed by the Superior, now gave way in a natural feminine emotion, before the vehement and peremptory expression of manly passion; her countenance changed, her voice grew tremulous.

„This,” she said, „is not the time nor the place suited to such a revelation: I cannot here tell you all, and, perhaps, what I can reveal is of the least importance.” After a moment’s pause, she added, in a hurried manner, „I am the daughter of Count O’Flaherty, and of that unfortunate Italian nun, whom the restless energy of your uncle and of mine, brought over to this country, for purposes utterly unavailing. My Mother’s abduction had been communicated to her uncle, the Abate O’Brien, by your indignant father, who had vainly challenged the seducer. The bravest officer in the French service refused to risk the life of the man whose services he had repaid by such injury; and in one so petulant and fierce, this was a redeeming forbearance: let it plead for him. My mother’s crime, which in Italy or Spain would have subjugated her to the living incarceration of the ‘*Vade in pacem*,’ was, in Ireland, safe from the vengeance of the ecclesiastic authorities; and the error which the church could not punish, it took measures to redeem. By the Abate’s influence, dispensations were procured from

Rome, and after twelve months of sinful existence, the Abbess of St Bridget became the wife of her seducer; who, under the moral influence of his kinsman, the Abbé O'Flaherty, submitted to a joke which, with him, broke for ever the tie of passion. The ceremony which legitimized my birth, preceded it but by a day. Your Foster-mother assisted at my entrance into life, when my mother, vowing me to the Virgin as an expiatory offering on the altars she had violated, impressed upon my brow this holy sign, the indelible mark of my destiny and immolation." (As she spoke, she raised her veil, and discovered a small black cross imprinted on the centre of her white and polished forehead.*

Lord Arranmore looked and shuddered, almost breathless, from intense interest and deep emotion —

„In the solitudes of Moycullen," continued the Superior, „passed the ten first years of my romantic life, amidst such associates as gave to your ardent mind its first direction. I shared with you, in my infancy, the affectionate solicitude and the wild legends of Morry-Brien, and even the instructions of her wilder son."

* This was a very ancient custom in Ireland, where it is still practised. Ludlow alludes to it in his Memoirs. The mark is impressed with gunpowder, in the way so commonly employed by sailors.

„Good God! interrupted Lord Arranmore „how extraordinary! I well remember her long and frequent absences from the Isles of Arran. I certainly, too received some impressions of your name — your eyes — that have floated like half-forgotten dreams in my memory, but have never been effaced.”

„We occasionally, I believe, shared the same cradle in infancy,” continued the Superior, casting down her eyes. „I profited too by the instructions of the Abbé O’Flaherty.”

„You were known, then,” said Lord Arranmore, „to all that surrounded me; — my father, my fosterers, my preceptor; and to me alone your existence was a secret.”

„It was so to all, save those whom you have mentioned. For the honour of the church and the sept, my mother’s abduction was covered by such little stratagems, as easily appease the curiosity and lull the suspicions of ignorance and superstition. Year after year her removal to some remote country was proposed, but was rendered impracticable by her state of mind and health: and those who were of necessity admitted to the secret, were sworn upon the cross of *Onor-ny-Cruise*, not to reveal it, so long as my unfortunate mother remained in a country, where catholicism, persecuted and calumniated, needed all the support, which the virtues and discretions of its professors could give it. — But to continue:

my father was recalled to France shortly after my birth, and never returned. My mother, with all the passions of an Italian, and the conscientious sensibility of a devotee, gradually fell a victim to remorse, awakened by disappointed affection: her mental malady took the fearful form of religious melancholy. I became the companion and vigilant guide of her wild wanderings. Pity and affection so early developed, ripened intellect, and sharpened it, into premature acuteness. I was also the pupil of her lucid intervals: she was a superior musician and linguist. I early benefited by her instructions, as I inherited her organization for the arts; but if I acquired her talents, I imbibed her enthusiasm and adopted her illusions."

"Her illusions!" reiterated Lord Arranmore, in the deepest emotion. "You are not, with all your powerful endowments, a dupe as well as a victim; and deceiving others, you are yourself undeceived."

"Your decision, Lord Arranmore," she replied coldly, her dark brows knitting into a singular expression of sternness — "your decision is more prompt than liberal."

"Forgive me, Madam," he replied, in confusion, "I beseech you. I am but — I am but guessing at a character, which defies all ordinary calculation of human intelligence and conduct. — Pray, proceed."

„Strange means,” she added emphatically, „were taken to subtilize my mind, from childhood; but they failed to deprave it. Intellect, well awakened, and blended with strong sympathies, can rarely be turned to false purposes. The utmost development of mind can lead but to truth; and the sublimest philosophy teaches but to increase the sum of human happiness. Brought up to propagate dogmas, I soon arrived at facts; and the veil dropped, and for ever. Educated for the purpose of obtaining an influence over the minds of others, I obtained a mastery even over those for whose service and secret views I was instructed. I have become their directing spirit, not their slave, and I wield the power and influence they have given me, for purposes directly opposed to their intentions.”

„Are you not, then,” interrupted her delighted auditor, eagerly, — „are you not here to give grace and splendour to institutions which had fallen into desuetude in Ireland, — establishments offensive to the Deity, because incompatible with the true duties and destinies of the species?”

„If I have been brought here for that end, I have wielded my influence for far other purposes. You have heard and seen; there is nothing here that recalls the unaccommodated, slovenly devotion of the old establishment of Mary, John, and Joseph: education is here

going on upon a liberal plan, to fit woman for the useful, blessed duties, that belong to her sex, as wife and mother, — by the arts, which soothe and soften life. I have brought over with me, the '*Sœur Choriste*' of my convent in Rome, to whom I am indebted for the cultivation of my musical talents. Music is the natural language of an Italian, and I avail myself of its influence, as did the legislators of old. For the rest, — time is occupied; and intellect, once awakened, will soon find its level. You have heard the cheerful noise of that merry mill, turned by a torrent, which is no longer a mere feature of picturesque desolation: you have seen the dwelling of the peasant, no longer a part of the soil, out of which it rises. Such is my Jesuitism, the only Jesuitism the age will bear, or Ireland, I trust, submit to. But time presses, and digression now, even for self-defence, is ill-placed. — The death of both my parents threw me into the power of my bigoted grand-uncle; who received me at the foot of Mount Cenis, from your father's hands. What followed I will not detain you to relate; my natural endowments answered the purposes of my employers, and were cultivated to the uttermost: for, from the *petites maitresses* of the Faubourg St Germain, to the powerful superiors of Italian convents, Jesuitism has always borrowed its agency from female arts, and female sub-

ety. I became in Italy the foundress of a new worship, the protected of popes and cardinals; and I retained the *prestiges* of my monastic position, with the advantages of every social distinction: bound to an order and its interests, — I was yet permitted to live in the world."

She paused — her mobile countenance wholly changed its character. A look of arch gravity gave a new expression to her features; and there was a tremulous movement round her beautiful mouth, as if she feared to smile, and vainly tried to look serious. The interest of her auditor, which deepened with every word she uttered, was now at its acmé; but he could only utter — „Well, Madam!"

She continued — „It was at this period, that 'my spiriting' was employed to rescue from the dangers of that world, one marked out by ancient prophecy to be the saviour of his country, and the restorer of the rights and the creeds of his forefathers. It so happened that this future champion, this hope of his family and his country, was a refractory young Jesuit, who, when still in his *parvæ*, and deep in the innocent studies of Ludovicus Vives, had chosen to think for himself, to burst his bonds, and to break the chain of prophetic event he was born to fulfil."

She paused again, and a significant and humorous smile passed over her features.

„Of the person, Madam,” said Lord Arranmore, „thus contemptuously alluded to, I am not ignorant; but the prophecy, — I beseech you go on.”

„If your lordship were as deeply read in the history of this unfortunate country, as I from necessity have long been, you must have known that the Irish have ever been superstitiously governed by their dependence on these prophecies. Such a prophecy was imagined to have you for its object. A mole on the cheek (the antitype of that of Brian Borru); your birth in the ruins of Dun Ængus on the festival of St Ignatius, were conclusive in your favour, and you became the object of the incessant vigilance and interference of our visionary relations. The confidant of the general schemes of the order, I could not but become acquainted with this particular underplot of your grand uncle, and with his views on you. Our common ancestors and fosterage, our common destiny worked upon my rather Irish imagination, and your resistance to a thralldom which pressed so heavily on myself, your struggles, and extraordinary and adventurous life, still farther interested and engaged me. Accident led me to a nearer insight into your views and character, at the carnival in Rome; and when an opportunity occurred of doing you an important service, I availed myself of it, something perhaps beyond the boundary of that

conventual propriety which governs the sex in ordinary life. Obligated by my position to avoid making myself known, the adventure necessarily assumed an air of romance, which in our subsequent intercourse it has been my — caprice perhaps to continue.”

„Your caprice?” repeated Lord Arranmore, in uncontrollable emotion.

„I must not be interrupted,” said the Superior resuming her imperative manner; „time presses, and I pass over all that is not essential to tell. At the time of your leaving Rome, I was employed to found an affiliation of our establishment at Florence; — but the spell was broken. A prince and a prelate for once were leagued with public opinion; and Leopold and Ricci succeeding in baffling the views of the order, and dispersing the devotees of the Holy Heart: — our house was suppressed. The French revolution, with other changes in Tuscany, made by the Grand Duke, followed up the blow; and I accompanied my aged grand uncle to the Netherlands, and thence to England; where alone his scattered order found shelter and protection. Still thrown by my sex and helplessness on my uncle’s protection, I again accompanied him to Ireland, where my little property, inherited from my father, was held in trust for me. It was then that I resolved on establishing this house; to improve the female members of my persecuted

sect; to take them out of the hands of vulgar bigotry, — to refine, to liberalize. This, indeed, I have not effected, by the means I should have preferred, but my agency is limited. Availing myself of the Abate O'Brien's imperturbable zeal and intentions, and of the influence of the popular religion I profess, I have established on the domains of my forefathers the institution in which you find me. I have worked with all the means afforded me. This, however, is not a moment to devote to *my* views; it belongs to your interests — to your safety.

„In a recent visit to Dublin with the abate, for the purpose of assisting your father and my uncle in his pecuniary involvements, you again came within the sphere of my observation at the review in the Phoenix Park. You might have remarked a foreign-built carriage which had got locked into the wheel of Lady Knocklofty's phaeton, close by the spot where you were stationed?”

„Yes, Madam, and I have heard her ladyship allude to the singular persons it contained.”

„Becoming the involuntary auditor of a conversation, which gave me a glimpse of the danger to which my cousin was exposed, I resolved to attempt his rescue, and — you know, or have probably guessed the rest.”

„I know — I have guessed nothing!” re-

plied her anxious questioner: „it is for the Sphynx herself to expound her own enigmas.”

„And yet,” she replied, with a faint smile, „Œdipus was no conjuror; any school-boy might have guessed the riddle that made the fortune of his sagacity: for, after all, he had only to deal — with a woman.”

„Only, indeed!” exclaimed Lord Arranmore, passionately.

„And a woman is so easily seen through; her feelings lie so obviously on the surface, her highest moral powers are so imperiously governed by her affections — ”

„Her affections, Madam!” interrupted Lord Arranmore; „did you say her affections?”

„Her sympathies, I should have said,” replied Madame O'Flaherty, colouring deeply; „and when her pity combines with her ingenuity, and both are called forth for the same object, then she becomes omnipotent. But to proceed: it was a curious coincidence, that I should have been a witness of the fray in which you were so deeply committed (for I was lodged in the Franciscan convent in Wine Tavern-street); I availed myself of access obtained for other purposes, to the castle, where I was sure of learning what might be your fate; I was in St Patrick's Hall, waiting for the means of returning home, during your interview with Lady Knocklofty; and while you slept, I exchanged the gift of a femme

galante, — for the awful signet of St Ignatius, a family relic presented to me by your father, which I used to arrest your passions, through the influence of your imagination.”

Lord Arranmore would have interrupted her, but she went on rapidly. „I was engaged in making a drawing of the antique mantelpiece of O'Brien House, when your arrival drove me into concealment; when I nearly met my death in that horrible accident from which you would, and Shane did, rescue me; and here (*par parenthèse*) I will add, that my influence over Shane is of old date: it began in Connemara, where I was the ‘delicate Ariel’ of this Irish Caliban; it was continued at Rome during his pilgrimage of penance, and has been confirmed by my assumption of the office of Abbess of Moycullen: the devotion of clanship and hallucination of mind have done the rest. Still anxious to serve and to save you, I accompanied your unfortunate father to the university, on the evening of your expulsion. He ventured to the hall of examination, and I awaited your sentence in the alley, from which I could not escape without discovery. I overheard your implication in schemes, as pure in their motive, and patriotic in their ends, as they were visionary in their means, and impracticable in their conduct. It was myself and your father who left the note and money in your rooms, during your absence with Lord

Walter: and it was still your *éternelle cousine* accompanied by her *sœur choriste*, who gave you *rendez-vous* on her own invitation (for the trashy *invito* worthy of the pen of such women as your Lady Knocklofty, was a *tour de page*, played off on your credulity, by the Reverend Mother of Moycullen)."

Lord Arranmore coloured to the eyes, bit his lips, and reiterated, „My credulity, indeed!"

Madame O'Flaherty, with a shy, sly, down-cast look, continued: „It was I, too, who worked your father, through his fanaticism and paternal solicitude, to the scene of the hospital fields, for the purpose of removing you from the seductions, which your virtues and passions alike rendered dangerous to you. It was I, who, as a *sœur de charité*, assisted at your sick bed, as I should have done at that of any other who stood in such need of my assistance. It was I who met you in the caves of Cong, which curiosity had led me to visit by torch-light, under the guidance of Shane, who upon the occasion of this nocturnal visit to Cong, first detected the *espionnage* of a person employed to watch your movements by the constituted authorities. From that moment Shane has never lost sight of you, and has occasionally 'done my spiriting,' not indeed gently, but ably. It was I who, with an effrontery worthy of Lady Honoria Stratton her-

self, came uninvited to the Jug Day; partly *pour m'égayer*, and partly — but here ends my Jesuitry. I saw you safely lodged beneath your aunts' roof, but saw you still with regret exposed to an influence you are the least calculated to resist. You are, however, your own keeper. It neither is my office, nor my inclination, further to interfere."

She paused, and cast down her eyes, and then added, „Since the Sphynx is destined to remain in her desert, to reign in lonely solitude, and at best to excite the curiosity of some chance wanderer, whom accident brings to her remote region, you will not, I trust, misconstrue the interest she has taken in your behalf; though somewhat, perhaps, too fantastically manifested. But," (and she hesitated and looked significantly), „men (and above all, such men), are always more readily convinced through their sensations, than their reason — for arguments are words, but images are facts; and a scene got up, is always well worth a case stated. I could not argue with you; I would not lecture, — and — a — "

„In a word, Madam," interrupted Lord Arranmore, piqued, through all his raptures and admiration, „the Ariel appointed to watch over the 'shallow monster,' by the pious Prospero of the Jesuit society, has acted much as her prototype did; and amused her own superior intelligence, while she played with the

weakness and folly of the subject committed to her power."

„At least," she replied, smiling, „give me credit for the purity of my motives, however capriciously evinced."

„I will give you credit for any amount of obligation you please to claim," replied her infatuated auditor; „but I beseech you, wrench not from me the belief, that, all lonely as I am in this wide world, there is one who feels for me that interest, which angels are said to feel for man! and that an agency so poetically wielded in my behalf, is not all the result of a caprice, or part of a system."

He looked full at her, as if he would have read her soul in eyes, but they were down-cast, and fastened on the earth.

„I cannot now," she said, after a long pause, „tell all that may be told; and to tell less, may be dangerous alike to both. Your impetuosity and most unexpected intrusion have hurried on an event, which I wanted only a favourable opportunity to bring about. For the rest, trust to me, when I tell you, that there is not a moment to lose: for your sake, for both our sakes, you must leave this country. It is also for your safety (and I speak not of your moral safety), that you return no more to Beauregard. Lord Knocklofty is already there. He was seen with his suite, this evening, while his wife was here, passing the

new line from the Heaths to St Grellan. The lord-lieutenant has been suddenly recalled to Dublin, for the purpose of issuing a proclamation, for the suppression of the Volunteers. Your last political *brochure* has attracted the attention of government; and the first steps of a prosecution are taken against the publisher. Your gallant and imprudent friend, Lord Walter, has found it expedient to leave Ireland.

„This intelligence I have this night received; and I was on the point of conveying it to you, by Shane, whom I awaited here, when your unexpected intrusion rendered it unnecessary.”

„I swear solemnly by all that man holds dearest, to obey you to the letter, as a superior intelligence,” said Lord Arranmore, rising, and approaching her, „if you promise that this interview shall not be the last; that you will yet communicate with me?”

„I promise,” interrupted the Superior, rising, and taking his hand to lead him forth, while pointing to the starry firmament, which illuminated and canopied a scene of infinite sublimity — „I promise,” she added, with solemnity, „by these great mysteries of nature, by which we are surrounded — mysteries of which we ourselves make a part, I promise, provided you leave the time and place to me.”

„Provided I leave it?” said Lord Arranmore, waving his head, and pressing the hand

he held to his lips (which was no longer withdrawn). „Alas! What am I? What avails my intentions? There is a destiny, which has long governed the events of my life, pre-occupied my thoughts, and left me without will or power to act, but by its sovereign inspirations. The sport, or perhaps, after all, the dupe of this assumed supremacy, my position is indeed far from dignified: but such as it is, I would not now exchange it, even for the independence I worship, and for which I have already made such unavailing sacrifices. So long as you honour me by an interest so flattering, — so long as you condescend to guide, it shall be my glory to be guided; but speak no more of me: one word, my lovely cousin, of yourself — of your strange and most uncongenial destiny. It is your advice that I should fly this unhappy country; it is my amazement, that you should remain here.”

„I cannot, like you” (she said with energy), „act for Ireland, — write for her — die for her! but I will do more, *I will live in Ireland*; and trust me, to do so, is the purest proof of patriotism, that those, unprotected by power and faction, can give. 'Tis a perpetuated struggle to the liberal; to the feeling, to those prone to sympathise, and unable to relieve, it is a perpetuated martyrdom — but this is no time for such discussion. Hark! 'tis Shane's horn.”

Lord Arranmore, startled by the information, listened, and the sound of Shane's melancholy horn was distinctly, though distantly heard.

„That,” said Madame O’Flaherty, in great perturbation, and withdrawing her hand, announces the arrival of one who must not find you here; and now farewell.”

„Of one!” said Lord Arranmore, with anxiety; „whom do you expect?”

„Our uncle, the Abbate O’Brien.”

„Ours!” he repeated, as they proceeded to the edge of the lake, where his boat now undulated in the mountain breeze. „Ah, *ma belle ccusine*, to have any tie in common with such a being, even one so dark and formidable! — ”

„*Ah! mon beau cousin*,” interrupted Madame O’Flaherty, in an animated accent, „this is no time for sentiment; I have promised, let that suffice — farewell:” and disengaging her hand, which he had again taken, she suddenly retreated to the glass door, closed it, and taking her lamp, disappeared into the interior of the building.

The splash of oars was now distinctly heard through the profound silence of the night; and the next moment, the shooting of a boat down one of the rapids which connect the series of lesser lakes, was visible. Lord Arranmore sprang into his own canoe, and vigorously plying his oar, gained the opposite side unobserved.

Exhausted by emotion, the most powerful he had ever experienced, fascinated to the spot, unable to tear himself from its vicinity, he threw himself on the bank under the shadow of an old fantastic beech, and within full view of that Abbey, the dwelling of her, who for the moment occupied every thought and faculty of his existence. If eloquence be but „the putting together of passionate words, and applying them to the passions of the hearer's,"* the musical, fluent, and graceful details of the Superior, her deep philosophy, and deeper feeling, even her imperfect accent, and foreign rhythm, had all the charms of eloquence with one, whose passions had lent themselves to every word she uttered. But the inference was still more intoxicating than the facts. Neither the pride nor the prudery of the Superior had enabled her to conceal a deeper interest, than her guarded words revealed; and that was a conviction which absorbed or banished every other idea. All the ambition of self-love was realized in this belief. Not for a moment did a sense of his own perilous situation darken, by its gloom, the bright, warm visions that fevered and convulsed him (for he had already determined to resign himself to justice, and stand between his publisher and the law). The moonbeams which played

* Hobbes.

through the branches under which he lay, were not brighter than the waking dreams, that cheered his visionary reveries. To him, the small space that moonlight shone upon, was the world, or well worth all the world beside. In solitudes so lovely and remote, with a female so far above the level of her sex, almost of his own, what a life might be enjoyed! All that love and liberty could lavish on one, whose devotion to both was the crowning sentiment of his existence, might be here possessed to their fullest extent. In such sites his ancestors had lived, and loved, and wandered, and preserved their wild, and not always joyous independence; and he imagined circumstances which might render even the life of an Irish outlaw more than endurable. Thus wrapped in visions of the highest mental excitement, he dreamed and slept.

CHAPTER VI.

THE FESTIVAL OF THE BEAVOIN.

Report me and my cause aright to the unsatisfied.

SHAKSPEARE.

Id commune malum: semel insanivimus omnes.

It is a splendid enjoyment to awaken to light and life with nature herself, and surrounded by her greatest works to participate in her brilliant renovation; but there is a more precious sensation still; 'tis when the eyes, long closed in deep and obvious sleep, open upon some devoted being, whose fostering care has watched over the helplessness of our slumbers. The representative of the Clan Teig O'Briens, had slept, as his ancestors had so often done before him, with earth for his couch, and heaven for his canopy; and with a faithful follower watching beside him. He arose with the sun from his bed of heather, refreshed indeed, but confused by his strange position. The mountains, the lakes, the Abbey all the sublime objects, on which his senses had dwelt in the dim, mysterious light of a waning moon, and under the influence of a dreaming fancy, were now spread before him, in the ful rea-

lity of form and colour. The branches of the beech, under which he had lain, had been woven into an impervious canopy above his head; while at the entrance of this fantastic bower, sat one who hummed the Lullaby of other times, which brought repose to the wearied. It was Shane-na-Brien. The object of his vigils gazed on him for a moment unobserved; and then springing upon and embracing him in a grasp, firm and nervous as the giant's own, he said, „Now, then, my dear Shane, you are mine: for once you cannot, and shall not escape me.”

Shane made no resistance, but looked on him with an expression of wild delight, and then cowering at his feet, and caressing his hands, he said, with a suffocated accent of pleasure —

„Och! musha, the great joy to be near ye, cushleen-ma-cree; and the pinance — and the vow — and too much joy for poor Shane, the murderer, *croishna Chrishna!*”

„You avoided me, then, as a penance?” said Lord Arranmore, smiling, and raising him from the earth.

„Musha, ay! only a vow upon the cross for two months and a day, and a bit of a promise to the blessed and holy lady, the Reverend Mother; and now ye have met, and shure I'll ingage she tould you all herself, and the Broah Tanah;* and never lost sight of ye day or night,

* The ancient prophecy.

but ever on the track of your traheens; ay, troth, like the brach on the slot of the deer; and saw ye often on the edge of the pit, and the Breagaslagh* on the steps of ye."

Through these wild and incoherent phrases, Lord Arranmore could just discover that a vow of penance and of obedience to the Superior had prevented Shane from indulging in his society, even in the moments when he might have done so with safety; and that there was some danger hanging over himself, which had been averted by the vigilance, with which his foster-brother had haunted his steps.

While these thoughts were passing through his mind, and he was preparing to follow Shane to the cabin of Emunh-na-Lung, where he was assured that a good breakfast, and *mille* welcomes awaited him, he was suddenly struck by a change of countenance in his companion, and by a crouching movement and a firing up of his eye. The next moment, Shane, with a tiger's spring, darted down the declivity near which they stood, and disappeared in a copse of furze. Immediately a discharge of fire-arms was heard, and Lord Arranmore in horror and consternation, bounded forward to follow; when Shane returning, met him, coolly wiping the pan of a pistol, which he replaced in his bosom. „Is any body hurt?" demanded

* A deceitful person, or traitor.

Lord Arranmore, in great perturbation. „Whom have you fired at?”

„The dioul takes care of his own,” said Shane, sullenly: „he has escaped now; but he's a sold man, the Breagaslagh — the informer — the bloodseller.”

„Of whom do you speak?” said Lord Arranmore, shocked by the frenzy of Shane's rolling eye, and the distortion of every savage feature.

„Of him, whose bought word hung me at St Michael's Cross, replied Shane, in Irish; „of him who follows you in the mountains to betray you; the blood-hound of the Sassoni that hunts the hart to its covert; the informer of the Hunks creatures of St Grellan, and the *Braithier-na-Earla*,* Corney the cadger, who has the *brianna*,** to dog and take you, *ma Cushleen*; but,” he added in a low mutter, while raising his clenched hands and blood-shot eyes to the heavens, but that moon, waning as it is, shall yet shine upon his corpse;” and he continued to move his lips in inarticulate and frenzied sounds, and preserving the same strongly marked attitude of religious invocation.

* The Earl's overseer, or driver. Such persons were often used as informers during the rebellion of 1798.

** The warrant.

„Miserable man!” exclaimed Lord Arranmore, shuddering in horror at the state of a country, where such things could be, and yet pass unheeded; and shocked at the sanguinary frenzy of the wild and unfortunate being, with whom his own wayward destiny had thus linked him, — „miserable man, would you, while still in penance for one involuntary murder, plan the destruction of a fellow-creature in cold blood?”

„Musha! shure God is good,” said Shane, sternly and blessing himself; „and there’s mercy for the pinitent, *laudate Dominum de cælis*, amen. And shure I would not vex you, dear, only the ould Brehon law, a thumb, and have sworn it by the hand of my father, and my mother’s grave — and it must be done, *judica me, Deus!*”

Lord Arranmore saw that this was not a moment to argue with one whose reason was in temporary abeyance; and whose faith and feelings, alike at variance with all judgment, nourished hallucinations, which under other circumstances they might have corrected or subdued. He stood therefore, a moment, in deep and dark meditation, awakened by his observation of the unhappy, fevered creature before him, who continued to mutter incoherent prayers in Irish and in Latin; till gradually and slowly coming to himself, his countenance fell into an expression of extreme ex-

haustion. Burying his rugged head in his huge hands, he wept; then wiping away the tears with his long matted locks, he turned his haggard and melancholy eyes on his foster brother, and in a voice of shame and contrition, said, „Ma Cushleen, shure, dear, you'll bear with poor Shane.”

Lord Arranmore took his extended hand and pressed it kindly; endeavouring to calm his agitation by a change of objects, he expressed a wish to go to the cabin of Emunh-na-Lung. Shane cheered up, seized his long twisted cipeen, which lay on the ground, and led the way. Lord Arranmore followed in spiritless silence to the cabin, where the grateful Emunh and his children, prepared by Shane for his arrival, waited on the threshold to receive him, and where a frugal but wholesome breakfast was in readiness against his arrival.

Thus humbly, but he believed, safely, lodged in regions every way correspondent to his feelings and his views; unrestrained by society, unfettered in his movements, by its duties and its forms, the late dweller in courts, and camps, and colleges, found that a mountain and woodland life,

More sweet
Than that of painted pomp,
was infinitely preferable to a cell in Galway gaol or a dungeon in Kilmainham. There was here none to distract his thoughts from the

object which now ruled them with sovereign influence; none „to cope him in his sullen fits,” or thwart him in the indulgence of those wild, but delicious reveries, which had precluded his sweet refreshing slumbers of the preceding evening. Here he determined to avoid the annoyance of his threatened caption, and to await the trial to which he was resolved to surrender himself.

He determined, therefore, to write to his publisher to inform him of the fact. He had also to acquaint his father's lawyer of his situation, and to direct him to make all necessary inquiries concerning his precise position, and prepare his defence. With his plans thus arranged, it became necessary that he should collect as much of his papers and wardrobe, as was necessary of his immediate use, to take leave of his aunts, with whatever excuse might present itself at the moment, and to return to Emunh-na-Lung's cabin, which he had fixed upon for his head-quarters.

With his mind lightened by these resolutions, his heart far otherwise pre-occupied than by his own personal safety, with spirits revived, and a volition roused to firm resolve, wholly engaged with the exciting present, and leaving fate to futurity, he mounted his pony (which he was not surprised to find in Shane's possession), and took the road to St Grellan. His inquiries at the post-office were answered

by a letter from Lord Walter, dated from Dover, explaining the motives of his temporary absence, and one from his publisher, announcing that the government had issued a warrant for Lord Arranmore's apprehension; and, in consequence of his disappearance, had likewise commenced proceedings against himself.

He immediately adjourned to an obscure public-house, between St Grellan and Bog Moy, where in a long letter to Lord Walter, he detailed the state of that part of the country, to which his mission had been directed; and explained the total absence of all immediate discontent in the catholic gentry, who (remote from official persecution, and living in habits of kindly intercourse with the old protestant families, their rents well paid, their cellars well stocked), slept over the degradation of their caste, and were ignorant or unmoved by the events which were passing in the distant capital. Six hundred years of oppression were now producing their moral effects. The conscientious notions of passive obedience of the catholic, were then fortified by the sacred and callous feelings of the man; while the pride and ambition (which under happier circumstances have since so honourably, and in spite of some errors, so usefully directed their views and their energies to the future), were exchanged for a silly, but too

national vanity, which centred itself in the oft cited past —

When Malachi wore his collar of gold,
Which he won from the proud invader.

Upon a population so dispersed, no political impression was feasible. The few who had sense and education sufficient to appreciate their disqualifications at their proper value, could not convene their less awakened countrymen, to arouse them by the infectious eloquence so peculiar to the Irish temperament. Orators could not fire, where there were no auditors to listen: and even, if all felt aggrieved, a constitutional resistance would have been a physical impossibility. In the corporate towns, as in those of other parts of the kingdom, fuel for disaffection was not wanting: trading loyalty and borough patriotism, showed themselves in all the petty oppression of subaltern authority, and in all the gratuitous insult of triumphant faction; but in the great towns, the catholics were decidedly inferior in influence and wealth and the possibility of resistance was not even suspected. The United Irishmen had, therefore, nothing to expect from a population so unawakened, and so dispersed.

Of his own personal views, Lord Arranmore could say little, for as yet they were floating and undecided; and on the subject which most nearly touched him, the discovery of a near

relation in the person of „the Jesuitess” of a former communication, he was silent.

By the same post, letters were dispatched to Mr Fitzpatrick, the publisher, and to Mr Fitton, the attorney; and the sun had set before Lord Arranmore took the road to Bog Moy. The darkness of a gloomy, drizzling night was already falling on the desolate domain of his now rather uncertain inheritance. Bog and waste, sea and mountain, swift-drifting clouds, and pattering showers, formed a combination of dreariness and gloom which gave to the red blaze of the turf fire, which shone through the parlour window of Bog Moy House, a splendour not its own, and seemed to render the hospitable hearth on which it burned the very focus of comfort. As Lord Arranmore approached the ever-open door, the full-raised chaunt of Major O'Mealy's well-known sonorous voice caught his ear. He alighted, and glancing his eye through the window, perceived a party at supper in all the enjoyment of true Irish conviviality. The Major was seated, *en maître*, at the foot of the table, Miss Mac Taaf at the head, and Mrs and Miss Costello, Father Festus, and Miss Monica on either side. James Kelly, stifling with laughter, was stationed at the sideboard; while the rest of the household, from „the ould woman” to the „boy about the place,” were gathered round the door,

purposely left open for such an auditory in all genuine Irish houses.

To appear in such a circle, for the purposes which had brought Lord Arranmore to Bog Moy House, was impossible. Taking, therefore, the priest's lantern, which burned on the table in the hall, he proceeded to his tower. There, packing up in a valise the things necessary to his immediate wants, with all his papers, and a few of his books, he remained, only to pen a hasty note to his aunt, promising to explain his sudden departure at an early opportunity, and expressing the gratitude and affection he felt for his quaint, old fashioned, but kind-hearted and affectionate relations. This note he sealed, and left on the table; then taking his portmanteau, and extinguishing the light, he mounted his pony, and took his road towards the cabin of his refuge in the mountains.

Within a mile of his destined home, Lord Arranmore was met by Shane-na-Brien, whose warning cornet he had more than once heard on his approach. Weary and dispirited, he exchanged but few words with his foster-brother, who trotted beside him, humming an ancient cronan, the melancholy and monotonous drone of which, served but to deepen the depression it was meant to cheer. The welcome which awaited him was as warm as an Irish heart ever gave: and the bed prepared for him

had the best property that can distinguish the couch of the weary, cleanliness. Every thing in this humble shed was of suitable simplicity; but the descendant of the supreme kings of Ireland thought of the wanderings of O'Donnel amidst the snows of the Dublin mountains, of O'Neil's bed of fern and rocky table, and acknowledged that his own position gained by the comparison.

Lord Arranmore's first act, on the morning following his arrival, was to dispatch a note by Shane to the Superior of the ladies of the *cuore sagro*. He thought he was fulfilling a duty, in informing one, so actively interested and so nearly related to him, of his intentions, and of the steps he had taken to retain his liberty, until it became necessary to resign himself to the law. He saw not that he was obeying an impulse stronger than his reason or will to direct it.

He concluded his note by observing, „Come what may, I will stand the trial that awaits me; for though falsehood, leagued with corruption and protected by power, may accuse, there is still an impregnable barrier for innocence in the trial by jury.”

With a hurry of perturbation which defeated its own purpose, he tore open the answer received to this note, and read as follows:—

„To admire the principle on which you act, is not to approve its application. You are

about to make an unavailing sacrifice. Trial by jury is of no value, where influence strikes the panel, and prejudice and faction govern the conscience of the jurymen. Like the other institutes of a free people, it is inapplicable to the circumstances of our proconsular despotism. Stay, and you are lost; fly, and you may yet serve that cause in other countries, which in your own you will now but mar.

„BEAVOIN O'FLAHERTY.”

He instantly replied, and dispatched his answer by Shane.

„MADAM,

„I have nothing left but honour. It is a possession I will not forfeit, even though you command me. I will not fly. But I will wait here for a time, in the hope of the accomplishment of your promise; and then I shall give myself up to those laws, which it is my doctrine to uphold, and must not be my practice to despise or evade.

„I have the honour to be,

„Etc., etc., etc.,

„ARRANMORE.”

To this second note no answer was returned. From the incoherent replies of Shane to his numerous questions, he could gather nothing, except that the Superior had met him in the old chauntry of the Abbey, an unfrequented spot, the burial-vault of the O'Flaherties,

accessible only to Shane himself, by a subterranean entrance, and to the Abbess, by a door, of which she kept the key. To this meagre intelligence was added, the knowledge that the Abbate O'Brien was still at the Abbey; and that great preparations were making for celebrating the festival of the Foundress, at which many of the catholic clergy of the country were to attend.

This was ungracious and provoking intelligence. Was Ireland then urged by its persecutions, to preserve those superstitious rites, which even the most catholic countries were now yielding to the progress of illumination? Connected with this reflection, was one of a more personal nature. The continued presence of his uncle must be a restriction upon his cousin's movements, and it added to the necessity of his own concealment. He adopted therefore a disguise, which confounded him with the simple inhabitants of the region: a coarse jacket, and trowsers of rateen, with a slouched had of rye-straw, left him distinguishable from the peasantry of the country only by those personal endowments, which dress cannot conceal. He now almost lived upon the lake, in the little *buirling*, which was just large enough to permit him to ply his oars; sometimes gliding under the shadows of its dismal rocks, and sometimes lying beneath the shadow of the alders, whose branches

fringed the sedgy banks. Occasionally the tones of a harp, stealing over the waters from the octagon tower, repaid him for these hours of listless, but impatient concealment. Once only he ventured to land, when penetrating the ruins of the Abbey, he was nearly discovered by the officiating priest, who attended to celebrate mass and vespers. Pursued to the lake, he plunged into it, and swam across. The incident excited suspicion, and was talked of at the Abbey, where it awakened considerable alarm. For it was known that a party at St. Grellan, who had recently assumed a particular colour, had a few days before burned a catholic chapel (a rare occurrence in those times), unpunished by the magistrates, and unnoticed by the government. A strong re-action to the supposed operations of the united Irishmen was developing itself; and every thing catholic was threatened with the vengeance of the protestant agitators. One of the authorities of St. Grellan had visited Moycullen, to inquire into the nature of the establishment, and some of the familiars of the Proudforts had been prowling in the neighbourhood.

At the instigation of Shane, who was evidently but the organ of his sovereign mistress, Lord Arranmore absented himself for a few days, visiting, with his fosterer for a guide, some of the romantic sites in the upper regions

of Bembola and Mam Turk. It was in such scenes, that the peculiar qualities of Shane came forth in singular adaptation. Light, rapid, and measured in his movements, this representative of the ancient *Turbicolæ*, pursued his way with unshod feet, and unsheltered head, in a quick, even dog-trot, throwing out from his broad, brawny, and naked chest a deep, short-heaved respiration. Sometimes, as he skirted a precipice (while his *protégé* wound beneath in a narrow gorge), he balanced his long pole, with a skill admirably adapted to his perilous, but self-chosen position; sometimes bounding down with fearless alacrity, he plunged the pointed end of his staff in the boggy earth, and then making it a *point d'appui*, sprung over the treacherous rut, which a causeway of tangled brushwood hid out from all ken but his. Of this excursion, Lord Arranmore took advantage to work upon the unsettled reason of Shane, and to wean him from his murderous designs against Corney the cadger. But the hallucination was too fixed to be permanently removed, and though he had momentary power over the ideas and the tears of his foster brother, yet on the slightest allusion to the treachery of the informer, Shane relapsed into his wildness and insanity. Lord Arranmore therefore determined to place him under the surveillance of Emunh, and to employ the wellknown influ-

ence of Madame O'Flaherty, and the clergy to bind him by a vow.

In spite, however, of Lord Arranmore's prudent resolves, and the solicitations of Shane to extend their wanderings, the morning of the third day found them returned to Emunh's cottage. Emunh had brought from St Grellan a letter from Mr Fitton, directed by Lord Arranmore's order, under the name of O'Flaherty, so general in the district. It informed him of the near approach of his trial, and of the necessity of his immediate surrender. There was not a moment to lose. Of the sum of money left by his father and cousin, twenty guineas still remained; and this sufficed for the present. He determined therefore to ride to Galway that night, accompanied by Emunh, to bring back the pony, and to proceed by the coach to Dublin, on the following morning. To get rid of Shane was a preliminary step, which was happily rendered unnecessary by his own sudden disappearance. He was seen running down the declivity, with his canoe on his shoulder, flinging it on the lake, and sculling to the opposite side. The lake indeed, on this day, was all alive: boats gliding down the rapids, passing up from the port, or crossing from the opposite mountains, centred before the porch of the Abbey church: for it was the long-expected festival of St Beavoin.

To this shrine Lord Arranmore resolved to

direct a last pilgrimage. The silence of his powerful cousin, the protracted accomplishment of her promise, her deep seclusion, contrasted with the active life she led before his arrival, were mortifying circumstances, which, during the few last agitated days of his life, gradually undermined his vague, but anxious hopes. Was it indifference? was it caprice? or was it submission to that imperious relation, who seemed to have taken up his fixed abode at the Abbey? There was now no time for conjecture or delay. Pausing only to write a few lines, to inform her of the cause of his immediate departure, and to intreat a moment's interview, the object of which he scarcely knew himself (if it were not once again to see her, and bid her adieu for ever), he made a succinct toilet, assumed his disguise, threw himself into Emunh's boat, and mingled with the devotees, who were crowding the nave of the church to suffocation.

The preparations for the service were rendered unusually solemn, by the coincidence of a mass for the dead. The remains of a member of the confraternity of Cong had that day been conveyed to the tomb of his ancestors, in the chauntry in the Abbey. Lord Arranmore shuddered to learn that it was his young and interesting friend, the Franciscan monk, whose melancholy prophecy was thus fulfilled.

On entering the body of the church, and

taking his place in an obscure corner, he raised his hat before his face, for other purposes than those of mental devotion. He looked around him, and observed that the altar was hung in that mournful attire, which the church has been accustomed to use in the last obsequies of her departed children, since the days of St. Ambrose. The sanctuary was occupied by the high priest and his ministers, who were chaunting the solemn service for the dead, alternately with the choir. The full and heavy notes of the catholic ritual, the moving appeals for mercy, were strikingly imposing. One object, however, alone fascinated the eyes of the concealed spectator, and engrossed every feeling. It was the Superior of the community!—She was much changed: there was nothing in her appearance of that spirited dignity, which had characterized her air and demeanour, when he had last seen her in the choir. The deadly paleness of her cheek, the strong expression of anxiety, which knitted her dark brows, and the melancholy of her fixed and abstracted gaze, convinced him, that she had not brought a disengaged spirit to the awful ceremony, at which she so pompously presided: for she sat in a stall, apart, richly robed, and with the well preserved crosier of the ancient Abbesses of Moycullen, beside her.

One person alone divided for a moment Lord

Arranmore's attention, with this all engrossing object, and that was the high priest himself. He resembled, as he stood at the altar, none of his order by whom he was assisted, whose submissive and obsequious countenances, were strongly contrasted with the stern physiognomy of the haughty Hierarch of an once almost omnipotent church. Lofty above the rest in stature, although loaded by years almost beyond the age of man, his singular and severe visage evidently excited in the beholders a reverence bordering on fear. The majesty of his air was increased by the magnificence of his vestments (relieved by the shabby, faded costume of the attendant priests); and as he stood in front of the altar, he threw round his still flashing eyes, in triumph: as if, in the revived splendour of these long neglected ceremonies, he beheld the accomplishment of hopes long cherished, the reward of a pertinacious ambition, the crowning object and end of his labours and his life.

Lord Arranmore shuddered, as he gazed upon this awful personage. It was the Superior of the Jesuit college at Rome, the Secretary of the Propaganda, the ever ruling and mastering spirit of his unfortunate father — the Abbate O'Brien; for whom high-sounding dignities abroad were but as feathers in the balance, when weighed against the hope of restoring his church and order to their

ancient supremacy, in his native land. Here he now stood; and though but presiding at the altars of a poor and remote Irish convent, he imaged, in his person, the pertinacity of ecclesiastical ambition, and the spirit of an order, not to be laid by the authority of princes, and vanquishable only by public opinion.

Lord Arranmore, wholly pre-occupied by the scene before him, alternately directed his anxious eyes, from the presiding priest, to the lovely, but absorbing Superior; and forgetful of his own perilous position, of the circumstances in which he was involved, and the purposes for which he had assumed his disguise, — he had impetuously advanced, and placed himself directly opposite to the stall of the Abbess, unconsciously maintaining his upright position, when all around him was prostrate. In that awful moment, when the elevation of the Host images the hallowed presence of „God on earth,” — when the altar bell tingled, and a low voice uttered the „*Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus*,” — at that awful moment a murmur was heard, a band of armed men rushed to the spot, where Lord Arranmore stood; he was suddenly seized — resisted — escaped his assailant, and again was surrounded. The next moment a pistol was fired, and an uproar, a conflict ensued, whose horror was increased by the sense of sacrilegious violation entertained by the catholic congre-

gation. Aloft above all, and in front of the object of attack, stood Shane-na-Brien; wild, infuriate, he held in his grasp, with maniacal force, the wretched victim of his long cherished vengeance, and was dragging him to the steps of the altar, as if to immolate him at the shrine of that Deity, whose rites he had impiously profaned: — it was Corney the cadger!

But even the maniac paused in his frenzy at the spectacle which at this moment presented itself. The inferior clergy had rushed among the people, as if to exert their powerful influence to preserve peace, and to prevent murder. But the high priest, the Caiaphas of the temple, stood motionless and erect, as if awaiting the martyrdom he was ready to undergo. Here ended his short-lived triumph; an age was summed up in an instant. The ghastly colour of his visage suddenly altered to a blood-red suffusion. His eye shot forth one flash of unearthly fire — a rattling sound died on his convulsed lips; and raising the crucifix on high, which he held with the last gasp of vital force, he fell dead upon the altar steps, which were covered with his blood. In the eyes of the congregation it was the blood of a martyr. The signal was given — the scene which followed was indescribable.

To execute a warrant from the Secretary of State was the pretence for the indecent vio-

lation of the temple of God; to scare catholicism from its altars, to insult, to outrage, and to provoke, were the motives which determined this choice of time and place. From the first moment when Lord Arranmore, foreseeing what must ensue, had shaken off his assailant Corney, he had endeavoured to reach the stall of the Superior, and to protect her from danger and insult. In the effort he had caught his uncle's eye, observed the sudden change in his countenance, and was hastening to his assistance, when he was himself knocked down, upon the altar steps, beside his dying relation. To all that followed he was insensible: and when he recovered his reason, he found himself lying on the earth, his head supported on a monument, and a small pitcher of water by his side. He drank freely and was much refreshed. He had been stunned by a blow on the back of his head, but not much hurt; and he looked round him and gradually recovered his powers of perception.

The dreary place he occupied was of Gothic architecture, and filled with very old and rude monuments. One grated window, in the further end, looked upon a lake, whose water dashed against its massive buttresses. He guessed, rather than knew, that he was in the old chauntry, mentioned by Shane, to whom, he took it for granted, he owed his safety. On approaching the window, the reviving

influence of the air quickly dispelled the faintness left by the blow. The opening at which he stood looked diagonally upon the Abbey church; and from the great window above the altar, a dense body of smoke rose in wreathed and voluminous folds. Shouts of savage triumph were mingled with the crash of broken wood-work: while, in the intervals, the low crackling of combustion was distinctly audible. As he remained for a moment fixed to the spot, a tremendous crash announced the fall of the Abbey roof, which was followed by a burst of light, reflected in livid redness on the lake, above the lustre of a meridian but clouded atmosphere. Groups of the peasantry were seen contending with the rioters beneath the walls; and at remote distances, women and children flying from the contest, and horsemen and pedestrians hurrying to the rescue of their friends, or to extinguish the fire.

Lord Arranmore flew to the low arched door, but it was fastened on the outside, and he sought in vain for any other egress. With the fury of an enraged tiger, he hurried through the gloomy house of death; he examined every tomb and penetrated every recess, but no traces of the subterraneous entrance of which Shane had spoken met his eye. He mounted to the stone embrasure of the window, and strove with the whole force of desperation, to wrench the iron grating from the stone, —

but in vain. In the full conviction of the inutility of his efforts, he threw himself on the earth in an agony of mind, in which every form of insult and danger that unprotected female helplessness could encounter, rose in rapid and terrible succession to torture and to madden him. One object, however, predominated in his fancy over every other; and the dreadful apprehension for his cousin's safety, the talented, the sensitive, the lovely Abbess, his benefactress, his guardian angel, banished every recollection even of his own horrible lot: for if Shane had fallen in the affray, or had been made a prisoner by the police, what was the destiny which awaited him in this living tomb?

By degrees, however, the sounds of tumult died away. The fire in the church had either subsided, or had been extinguished. Hour passed after hour, and each with the tediousness of an age. The lake upon which the chauntry stood, was rarely navigated; and no sounds from the interior gave indication that a human being still lingered round the ruin. At last the splash of an oar was heard, and coasting beneath the shadow of the craggy rocks, a boat was seen winning its devious and stealthy way to the window of the chauntry. Lord Arranmore's heart beat quick; he put his hand out through the bars; a note, fastened to the point of a boat-hook, was thrust through

the window ; and the boat again glided silently within the protecting shadows of the rocks.

Lord Arranmore tore open the paper, and recognized with transport his cousin's writing. It ran as follows :

„Those for whom probably you are most interested, are safe. Think only of yourself. Means for your evasion are prepared. You will be conducted to Emunh's cottage after sun-set ; flight will be still in your power : act as prudence and principle may direct ; and for the promise so solemnly given, believe that it shall be fulfilled at a more convenient season. For the present it must be deferred.

„B. O.”

Soothed and pacified, and furnished with the materials for gracious meditation, Lord Arranmore was enabled to pass the interval which preceded his enlargement with patience. Released from his apprehensions for his cousin's safety, he sought and found gratification in this new instance of the interest she manifested in his behalf ; and the brief missive, cool and concise as it was ; still came from her, and had his safety for its object. At the time appointed Emunh appeared, and leading the way through a vaulted passage, terminated by a flight of steps, conducted the prisoner to an opening upon the rocks, where a boat was moored, beneath the shelter of projecting underwood.

On the way over, Emunh, in reply to Lord Arranmore's anxious questions, detailed in a low voice the events of the day. The death of the aged Abate had roused the peasantry to ungovernable madness. The Fencibles, who had been stationed at a small distance from the Abbey, were called to the assistance of the police; and in the conflict which ensued, having obtained possession of the church, they demolished the seats, altars, and stall-work. Piling the wreck of their fury into a heap, they had kindled a fire, which soon reached to the dry oak rafters; and having destroyed the roof, burned itself out. In the meantime, the catholic gentry who had attended the funeral, having conducted the ladies of the community to a remote and secure part of the building, had aided in appeasing the riot. Many of the peasantry had been made prisoners; but Shane, who had fought with a desperate fury, had escaped to the mountains, hotly pursued by Corney the cadger, and a detachment of the military.

On arriving at an unfrequented spot, on the opposite side of the lake, Lord Arranmore and his guide entered a lonely and untrodden glen, which after a quarter of an hour's brisk walking, brought them to Emunh's cottage. There, refreshments were already provided, of which the former stood in much need. The welcome meal being hastily dispatched, Emunh

led Lord Arranmore's pony to the door, ready saddled, with the valise strapped in its place; and urging the necessity of immediate departure, presented a letter which he said came from the Superior. It was an inclosure containing two fifty pound notes, and the address of Mad. O'Flaherty at the Franciscan convent, in Dublin.

Lord Arranmore sighed as he unwillingly put up the inclosure (of which he resolved to make no use), until he should have an opportunity of restoring it to the generous donor. The offering wounded him; — one line from the hand that made it, would have been worth millions. But there was no time left for the indulgence of feelings, natural in one whose warm passions brooked no disappointment, and whose pride was sharpened by adversity to a morbid excess. Forcing a small remuneration upon his humble but grateful host, he bade him a hurried farewell, and struck into the bridle-way, which led to the high road to Galway.

It was lonely and deserted. The setting sun was struggling through masses of dark and stormy clouds, and shot its long yellow rays over the distant ocean, casting a lurid light upon the highest tops of the mountains. The solitary sojourner in wilds so dreary had advanced for a considerable time at a brisk pace; but, by degrees, he had dropped his bridle

on his horse's neck, insensible to his „whereabouts,” unconscious of external objects, with one deep-seated and master-thought overruling every other, he was lost in reverie, when the clanking sound of a horse's feet caught his ear and roused his attention. He seized his bridle, and gave spur to his little steed; but his progress was arrested by the approach of a person of muffled and mysterious appearance, preceded by a ragged boy, who seemed to act as guide. Lord Arranmore's first impulse was to plunge into the copse to his left, to avoid one, who was perhaps in pursuit of him; but he soon perceived that the intruder was a female, in the coarse dress of the country, a blue mantle and deep hood.

He drew aside to let the traveller pass, but glancing his eye beneath her close-drawn hood, he discovered the agitated countenance of Lady Knocklofty. He halted in the shock of utter amazement; and in deep and uncontrollable emotion, exclaimed, as he alighted and approached her,

„Gracious heavens! is it possible? Lady Knocklofty here?”

„It is possible!” she replied, in a voice tremulous with agitation; „it is pitiable — it is true.” A silence of a moment ensued; when she added, with a deep-drawn sigh, „Yes, Lord Arranmore; you see before you the un-

fortunate, the imprudent, but not the ungrateful Lady Knocklofty."

Lord Arranmore gave his horse to the boy, and taking the reins of Lady Knocklofty's, walked beside her. Another pause ensued, and he then said,

„To meet you in so wild a place, in so unsuitable a dress, and unseasonable an hour, unaccompanied by friends, unattended by servants, what can this mean? — what has led you here?"

She abruptly replied, „You!" and the answer but deepened his consternation. He was unable, or unwilling to reply; and she continued, „You see before you one whose pride is humbled in the dust, whose strength is her weakness, and whose sense is overpowered by her sensibility. My duty to my husband, to my children, my self-respect, my regard for reputation, are not merely surmounted, they are unfelt. Your liberty, your life, are in danger. To rescue, to save you, to warn you of your danger, and to offer you the means of escape, have led me into these solitary regions, unattended, unprotected."

„Think not of me, dearest and most generous Lady Knocklofty — think but of yourself — your precious self, he exclaimed in most passionate emotion. „The evening is already falling — you are alone — you are far distant from Beauregard. Be the consequence what

it may, I will accompany you back. If my hours of liberty, or even of life are counted, could my last moments be better employed than in the service of the noblest, the most generous of created beings?"

„Never," said Lady Knocklofty, with passionate vehemence, while her tears dropped on the hand that now pressed upon her's; „and I swear by that sinking sun, never to return to my home, my children, till I have placed you beyond the reach of that persecution, which they with whom I am fatally linked, have raised against you. For me, I am wrecked beyond the reach of all redemption."

Gratitude, admiration, pity, every sentiment (save perhaps respect) agitated the object of this most generous infatuation. Confounded, alarmed, he knew not what step to take. „Let me, at least," he said, mounting his horse and holding the bridle of her's, „let me conduct you homeward, while I reveal to you my means of escape. This ravine enters into the new line of road to St Grellan, and —"

Lady Knocklofty snatched the reins from his hand — „Ungrateful and insensible!" she said, „I know your infatuation for one as cold as she is false renders you insensible to the feelings of humanity. She turned her horse's head, and motioned Lord Arranmore, as if to dismiss him.

„Be the consequence what it may," he said,

„I will not leave you thus. For myself, I am reckless, and I am now hastening to Dublin to stand my trial.”

„Then you are lost!” interrupted Lady Knocklofty, impetuously. „This day I have heard your doom pronounced. The libel is not all that is laid against you; charges of a most treasonable nature, on evidence as apparently convincing as I know it to be false, which involves you in the proceedings of men, who are the dupes and the victims of hired instigators and spies. I have seen the Chancellor's letters to my husband; and it is determined to make an example of the first well born and marking personage they can catch in their toils: you are that person. I have not lost a moment in seeking you. Think not that I am deceived by this appearance of generosity. Nothing that concerns you is unknown to me. I, too, have my spies; and I heard from my informers that you were in these mountains, that you were lurking about the Abbey, and and that you had been seen at midnight conducted to your boat by your Abbess.”

„Gracious God!” said Lord Arranmore, striking his forehead, in an agony beyond his power of concealment, at having thus imprudently committed one for whom he felt so much, and to whom he stood so deeply indebted.

„Lord Arranmore,” continued Lady Knock-

lofty, drawing from the breast of her habit her handkerchief, which she bathed in her tears, „your conduct was not grateful, it was not humane” Her sobs interrupted her words.

„If the sacrifice of my life could dry those precious tears,” he said, tenderly and softly, „it should be offered at your feet. But, dear Lady Knocklofty —”

„I want no sacrifice. I ask but to be permitted to save you; and to leave to others the recompense of a wayward heart, which gives itself capriciously, not gratefully.”

„To owe my liberty, my life to you, would render both more valuable. But again I urge you, think not of me, consider only yourself, consider where you now are!”

„Where alone I can be useful to you,” she interrupted him. „Nobody knows the imprudent step I have taken, but my friend Lady Honoria. Let me not err in vain; we are now within a mile of the Heaths: that bright point of light is its vane. I mean to pass the night there. This gate leads to its young plantations.” She advanced and pushed open an iron gate with the end of her whip, as she spoke. Lord Arranmore followed her along the margin of a lake, and she continued: „I will not take you to the house. Neither the innocence of my conduct, nor the purity of my motives, would save me from censure, were it known

that you accompany me. But alight; and if that fishing-house is open, I will communicate there what else I have to say."

Wild and agitated as herself; Lord Arranmore obeyed her, whom it was now so difficult to resist. A manly pity, a deep but honest commiseration, gratitude the most profound, and fears for her safety and reputation, the most acute, were the feelings by which he was governed; unmixed with one thought which virtue itself might disapprove. To leave her in such a moment, was to be more, or less than man: he advanced and perceived that the boat-house was open. The interior was dimly illumined by the fading twilight; but it appeared to be an elegant pavilion, decorated by the hand of luxury and taste. In assisting Lady Knocklofty from her horse, he was shocked by her pale and altered appearance, and by the feebleness of her movements, as he supported her on his arm. He led her to a sofa, and leaned over a chair beside her. She wept freely; and relieved by this indulgence, she recovered her selfpossession, and drew from her bosom a packet of papers:— „There," she said, „are copies of the informations which have been lodged against you. The facts they contain may serve you in-your hour of trial."

Lord Arranmore pressed the generous hand that offered them to his lips. „My hour of

trial!" he exclaimed, with emotion. „Oh, Lady Knocklofty!"

* * * * *

The storms of a night, in which all the elements had been thrown into fearful contest, were gradually subsiding into the low broken sobs of the gushing wind, the distant roll of retreating thunder, and the faint gleam of innocuous lightning. The grey, faint dawn was struggling through the vapours, which canopied the summits of Bembola and Mam Turk; when upon the brink of one of the precipices of the Glan Mountain, a human figure appeared, which well belonged to a scene so wild, so awful, and so desolate. The fugitive (for such he must have been, unhoused, and wandering in such an hour and place) had just merged from a narrow ravine of furze and brambles; and was tearing, with wondrous strength, the tangled branches of a scathed beech tree, to obtain a passage into the glen beneath. He had cleared a way, and was plunging headlong down, when (all reckless as he seemed) he was withheld by that instinct that survives even the love of life itself.

The increasing light (for though moon had not yet set, the dawn was faintly breaking) rendered the peril of his position fearfully obvious: yet not more fearful than his own appearance. There was blood upon his hands,

his eye was wild and sunk, his colour ghastly, his features distorted. His uncovered head had caught, in its thick and matted locks, fragments of burrs and thistles, which he had encountered in his flight; his clothes were torn, his neck was bare, and his whole exterior bespoke one hunted to the death. It was an awful, an affecting spectacle: and the more affecting, because on that forlorn figure and distorted countenance, were still visible traces of the finest impression of God's own mark, when „after his own image he made man.” The fugitive was Murrough O'Brien, Lord Arranmore.

He had eluded the pursuit of justice. He had escaped from the officers, who had traced him to the Circean bower, whose threshold he had crossed, in the consciousness of an unsullied life; and from which he had escaped, with life indeed, but not unsullied. On the first alarm, he had sprang from an open window into the lake, urged only by the hope of saving her from shame, who had plunged him into crime. Weighed down by the dripping waters, which he had endeavoured to wring from his saturated clothes, he had flung off his coat and cravat; and exposed to the thunder storm, which shook even the mighty regions in which he wandered, he continued to ascend the acclivities of the Glan Mountain, in the hope of crossing to Lough Corrib.

The first glimmering of the dawn disclosing to him the dangers of his horrible position, he let go the branches he had torn aside with his lacerated hands; and ascending a craggy rock, perceived a bridle track; while a column of smoke staining the pure morning sky, announced the proximity of some human habitation.

As he advanced, his steps were arrested by a low faint moan. He paused. It might be the complaint of some dying animal; but his own wretchedness was in sympathy with all that suffered; and he proceeded to the spot whence the sound had issued. A groan of human agony came from the glen beneath the shelving rock on which he stood. Thrown, as he himself was, beyond the pale of humanity, he still was tremulously alive to its sympathies; and descending the rocks with as rapid a step as their steepness would admit, he found himself in a deep, dark, narrow glen, whose shaggy rocks almost closed over his head; while the moon, shining faintly above, concentrated its rays on the body of a man, who lay upon his face weltering in his blood. A gory track was visible on the salient points of the rocky declivity, intimating that the wretched being had been hurled from the summit, on which he had received his death-wound. The victim still breathed; but a torrent of blood was gushing from his breast.

Lord Arranmore raised the dying man in his arms; and as his eyes fell upon the face, he recognized the distorted features of Corney the cadger. With an impulse of horror, he was on the point of letting him drop, when the victim grasped him in the strong gripe of death, and raised his dim eyes with a look of such agony, that, turning aside his own, he could only articulate, „Wretched man, what has brought you to this?”

The cadger, with an effort at articulation, which convulsed every hideous lineament, endeavoured to pronounce the name of his murderer; when a shrill, loud blast from a horn echoed through the rocks above the glen. At that sound the dying man gave one fearful spring from the arms of his supporter, and fell a corpse upon the earth; while the appalling figure of Shane, half way down the rocks, with one hand pointing to the vapoury and waning moon, and the other clenched, as in triumph over the dead body, added to the horror of the scene.

The wretched and solitary spectator of this awful tragedy, himself unobserved by Shane, now stood motionless, with every faculty frozen and palsied, unable, and perhaps unwilling to communicate with the perpetrator of a deed so bloody. Time, however, was not allowed him, either for reflection or for action; a sudden burst of sound roused him from his con-

temptation, and the next moment he beheld the mouth of the glen filled with armed men. He was instantly surrounded, seized, and bound. The horror of his fate overwhelmed him; he had neither the wish nor the power to resist. Manacled and chained, he was placed on horse-back before a dragoon. The dead body, laid upon a bier of woven branches, was raised upon the shoulders of two smugglers, who had conducted the soldiers through the mountains; one of whom had seen Lord Arranmore's escape from the lake into the ravines of the pass. The party proceeded; and the exhausted and almost senseless prisoner was lodged in the gaol of Galway. The next morning he was conveyed in a chaise and four, escorted by a troop of horse, to Dublin; and on his reaching that capital (where, as the leader of the most brilliant of the Irish Volunteers, as the orator of the Historical Society, and the most gifted member of the University, he had but a few months before „won golden opinions from all sorts of men”), he was lodged in the state prison of Kilmainham, in whose dungeons some of Ireland's most distinguished sons were then incarcerated.

His prison chamber rose above that high and terrible wall, then deemed so lofty, as to need no sentinel to add to its security. On the opposite bank, at a small distance, there stood an old and formless pile of ruined walls.

The arrest of a young nobleman, so gifted, so accused, and in public supposition so guilty, excited a strong sensation in the metropolis, where the reign of terror, which preceded the horrible epoch of the Rebellion, had already begun to spread dismay, and to agitate the public mind. The public papers were full of reports concerning the murder perpetrated in the Glan Mountain. The manner in which Lord Arranmore had been taken, — alone, — at day break, — by the side of the corpse, from which life had scarce departed, all corroborated the probability of his guilt. He was likewise smeared with blood, and so overpowered by his own emotions, as to offer no defence, and to make no resistance: but above all, a warrant for his arrest was found in the pocket of the dead man, who, it was supposed had fallen in a contest with the object of his pursuit. These just grounds of a suspicion were almost confirmed by the obstinate and desponding silence of the prisoner, from the moment of his captivity.

From the time, however, when he was visited by his counsel (for none others were admitted to him), considerable exertions were made for his defence. On the second week of his detention, which resembled the *carcere duro* of an Austrian prison, his day of trial was appointed. Curran, Fletcher, and others of the most distinguished members of the bar

were engaged for his defence. The court and all its avenues were crowded to suffocation. Multitudes of the people, with anxious countenances, were gathered in close array, muttering their feelings and opinions, as they drew back, to admit the carriages of the judges and the lawyers, employed on either side. Within the halls, men of the highest rank, members of the government, and of both houses, were pressing and rushing on, to seek for places, already pre-occupied by others, as anxious, as curious, and as influential as themselves. The leading members of the society of United Irishmen, with a sympathy and courage, which distinguished them in all the legal prosecutions of their brethren, were congregated near the dock. Convinced of the innocence of the prisoner, and suspicious of the foul purpose to which appearances might be turned against him, they saw the necessity for their countenance and support; and no personal considerations of danger could prevail with them to absent themselves. Many females also of the highest distinction, and most noted fashion (the particular friends of Albina Countess Knocklofty, whose protection of the accused was not forgotten), were seated on the bench. The three Ladies O'Blarney were conspicuous, with their three white pocket handkerchiefs, the insigne of their well-prepared sensibility. The good Lady Mary was accom-

modated with a seat next the judge. Her ladyship had, from the first committal of the accused, exhibited as much zeal in behalf of his soul, as her husband had shown perseverance in urging forward the prosecution of his person. She had sent him tracts, and had written him frequent letters on faith and justification; and though he had taken no notice of her pious endeavours; she counted upon, and announced his conversion, as among the triumphs which graced her mission. In his personal sufferings, she had no sympathy; but in his salvation, as it was to be worked through her instrumentality, she had a deep interest. And now —

The charge was prepared, the lawyers were met,
The judges arrayed — a terrible show,

and a silence the most awful followed. The panel being sworn, and the clerk of the crown standing in readiness to read the indictment, a short pause ensued; which was succeeded by a low buzzing whisper, while all eyes were directed to the still empty dock. As the delay was protracted, anxiety increased. The judge whispered an officer of the court below him, and then desired the sheriff aloud to produce his prisoner. The sheriff disappeared, and in a few moments returned, pale and breathless, to announce that his prisoner had — escaped!

A loud murmur, amounting almost to approbation, arose among the crowd, at the

extreme verge of the court; while something like disappointment was visible on the countenances of the female auditory. The three Ladies O'Blarney put up their three white pocket handkerchiefs, and ordered their carriage to a morning concert at the Rotunda. Lady Mary desired her coachman to take Kilmainham (in his way to an auxiliary supplementary branch society for converting Tippoo Saib and his subjects), to make inquiries concerning the flight of her proselyte. Inquiries were made; but the only details she could learn, were, that certain mysterious characters had been found chalked on the ruins opposite his prison window, that a knotted rope had been found hanging over the lofty wall of Kilmainham, and that the impression of a gigantic foot was traced beneath.*

A letter was found on the prisoner's table, addressed to the judges. It was a simple and solemn denial of the political crimes charged against him; and more especially of the murder of the informer. On the former point, opinions varied, with the prejudices and the interests of those who expressed them. But there was so evident an embarrassment in the short explanation he gave of the circumstances

* Such are the literal details of the escape of an United Irishman, who has since been made known to fame, as one of the most gallant officers in the French service.

which brought him to the spot where he was taken, that the murder was almost unanimously laid to his account, until his reputation was cleared by the voluntary confession of — the murderer himself. It was Shane-na-Brien; who, whatever might have been his motive — whether a desire to clear his foster-brother from the horrible imputation, a weariness of life — or the hope of expiating in this world, a crime for which he believed eternal punishment awaited him in the next — surrendered himself to justice, and was, on his own declarations, convicted and executed.

Of the Abbey of Moycullen, nothing but its ruins remain. Its fair members, again restored to the bosoms of their families (woman's best sanctuary), still cherish a feeling of admiration almost religious, for the gifted and extraordinary Superior, under whose auspices they had been for a time congregated; and whose immediate departure from Ireland was believed to be connected with the flight of Lord Arranmore. To her agency, indeed, was attributed all the ingenuity with which the escape of the prisoner was conducted; and the gossiping of the town of St Grellan had exaggerated circumstances, till, to the heated imaginations of its visionary inhabitants, they appeared a fulfilment of the old times, of the inseparable connexion between the destinies of THE O'BRIENS AND THE O'FLAHERTYS.

CHAPTER VII.

CONCLUSION.

Time is like a fashionable host,
That slightly shakes his parting guest by th' hand,
And then with arms outstretched, as he would fly,
Welcomes the comer.

SHAKSPEARE.

La révolution ne vient pas de tel ou tel homme,
de tel ou tel livre ; elle vient des choses.

CHATEAUBRIAND.

THE French Revolution was the result of causes deep-seated in the institutions it destroyed. Its frequent re-organization gave to it a succession of characters, each differing from the other. The reign of terror was the shortest, but its impression was the most permanent. The consular *régime* was the most perfect, but seems to have been the soonest forgotten. It, however, in its first epoch, met the hopes, and reconciled the opinions of all. The liberals looked with confidence to the re-establishment of rational liberty ; the royalists looked to the return of the Bourbons ; and France in 1802, typified by England in 1660, beheld in Napoleon Bonaparte another Monk. The church, after her complete prostration, elevated to her ancient alliance with the state, dignified the conqueror of Italy, and of the Pope, with the name of her „restorer.” The people called for *panem et circenses*, and obtained both ; and he in whom „la

puissance de la révolution" now centered — the destiny of kings, and the pacificator of Europe, — as yet avoided all occasion of shocking public opinion, and refrained from assuming all external forms of power, beyond what might become the Chief Magistrate of a republic.

It happened one evening, that as the First Consul was writing in his cabinet after dinner, and the ladies of his family, with the Generals Rapp, Bessières, Lannes, and Lebrun were taking coffee in the saloon, a proposal, made by Madame Murat, to go to the Opera to hear the grand oratorio of Haydn, which was the rage of the day, was acceded to *à l'unanimité*. The General Lannes was deputed to invite the Chief Consul, who instantly adopted the proposition. The „*piquet d'escorte*” was ordered, the carriages drew up, and Mad. Bonaparte, lingering behind while „*le brusque et brave Rapp*” arranged her shawl „after the manner of the Egyptian ladies,” was called upon by her lovely sister-in-law with „*dépêchez - vous donc, ma sœur, voilà Bonaparte qui s'en va.*”

The visit to the opera, thus uncalculated, was yet, in consequence of some strange reports, expected: and either this expectation, or the attraction of Haydn's Creation, had filled the house almost to suffocation, at an unusually early hour. Long before *le premier coup d'archet* was heard in the orchestra, the arrival of some high foreign *donna d'importanza* had

called forth all the interested civilities of the members of the box-keeping department. The *contrôleur* from his little office, cried aloud to the *ouvreuse de loges*, „*Citoyenne ouvreuse, la loge, s'il vous plaît, de Son Excellence la princesse de Fustiburg.*” As this was the first night that *Son Excellence*, the wife of the Austrian Plenipotentiary, had visited the opera, her titles rang sweetly in the ears of the attendants on the *bureau de l'Opéra*. Theatrical personage are all aristocrats; and „*la loge de Son Excellence la Princesse de Fustiburg,*” seemed to find a deathless echo through the corridors and the saloons; while *la citoyenne ouvreuse*, scudding respectfully before the Princess, threw open the box door, drew forth the *fauteuil*, arranged the cushions, let down the *grille*, and presented *l'imprimé*, or the book of the oratorio.

The Princess was a true German princess in appearance. Full, fair, and fresh, for one who had evidently passed her *première jeunesse*, she was not without pretensions; and she had given to her somewhat redundant *embonpoint* all the advantages of a splendid toilet. In passing to her box, she had fixed the attention of a group of military, who stood laughing and chatting, in expectation of the commencement of the music; when one among them (but not of them, for he had a decidedly British *tournure*, and was in the dress of a *pekin*) suddenly started off, brushed by the box-keeper, and abruptly entering the box, exclaimed —

„Heavenly powers! can I believe my eyes? Kitty, my sweetest, is it possible? Can it really be you? Well, this is too much happiness!” and, shutting the door, he pressed the fair hand he had seized to his lips, exclaiming, „Surely you have not forgotten me, Miss Macguire?”

„Lord Kilcolman, I believe,” replied the lady, drawing up. After the first evident shock of her surprise had subsided, she fixed her eyes steadily, but somewhat humorously, upon him, and added, „I really did not at first recollect you; how much you are altered. You have grown so very thin and yellow, that you are quite *méconnaissable*.”

„And you too, my lovely friend, are altered, but it is not for the worse, by Jupiter. I give you my honour, you are a thousand times handsomer than ever — may I perish, if I flatter.”

„I heard you were dead, Lord K.,” said the lady, coolly pinning her *imprimé* to the front of the box.

„There never was the least foundation for the report, I give you my honour. It originated solely in my voyage to the Dead Sea: but never mind me, talk only of your lovely self. By all that's precious, I have not, felt so much pleasure since I parted from you in the little study at Knocklofty House, an age back. But tell me, dear, what has brought you to this place? Who is the Prince Fusty, something, this elegant set out belongs to?”

„He is the Austrian minister.”

„The Austrian minister! to be sure he is, I remember now all about him. Then I suppose you are here, with your aunt the Countess Macguire, with whom, I understand, you went to live at Vienna; and who is, by all accounts, the minister's minister.”

„No,” said the lady, drily, „I am here with the minister himself.”

„With the minister himself! you take away my breath; and in what capacity, my sweetest?”

„In the capacity of his wife.”

„Heavenly powers! do you tell me that? Ah! Kitty, you who —” and his lordship actually brought those tears to his eyes, which the nervousness of dissipation so easily calls forth.

„Why, what would you have me do?” said the lady, screwing up her pretty mouth, and looking down pensively. „You would not have me pass my life in weeping for your infidelity and breach of promise?”

„Infidelity! and breach of promise! By all the powers, you wrong me, Miss Macguire! that is, Princess, I mane. You knew my unfortunate situation: cleaned out of the last shilling at Daly's, and eased of my last acre in Tipperary; threatened by my creditors, and tormented by my mother, to make that odious match which was to set all to rights; urged, too, by my political friends, with respect to the union which was then brewing; in short, paint to yourself for a moment, the minister's niece

with twenty thousand pounds fortune, a foreign embassy, and a pension for life. Could you blame me, Kitty, dearest?"

„Oh, no, my love, no!" hummed the Princess, after the manner of Miss Macguire; „but could *you* blame *me*, my lord, if in my despair, I——I—— consented to become ——"

„Ah, you creature!" sighed his lordship, languishingly.

„A Princess of the empire," continued Miss Macguire, humorously.

„Upon your honour! and are you a raal Princess?"

„Real and undoubted, as you are a real Irish peer. But come, Lord K., we have each of us fulfilled our destinies; so a truce with sentiment and reminiscences. I hate thinking of the past; it's worth nothing: so pray, let's talk of the present. In the first place, what could have possibly brought *you* here? *Je n'en reviens pas.*"

„Why, dearest, having joined the allied army as a volunteer, on my return from Jerusalem, I ——."

„From Jerusalem! ha! ha! ha! *cela passe outre.* What in the world could have taken you to Jerusalem?"

„Faith, I don't know; that is, it's a long story. When I returned to England from my embassy, and our party was out, and poor Lady K. dead, I found there was no getting on, especially for us Irish Union lords, and the

whigs coming in, and that sort of thing. So I got tired of the clubs and *ennuyé de ma personne*, as we say in France, and I thought I'd just take a trip to Jerusalem."

„But, why to Jerusalem?" asked the Princess, still tittering, what an odd place to go to, *pour se désennuyer*, and a distant one. How came you to fix upon it?"

„Pon my soul and honour, I don't know, if it wasn't to eat Jerusalem artichokes on their own soil: one must have an object, you know."

„To be sure: and was that the only object which determined your pilgrimage?"

„Not entirely. The fact is, do you see, there is no getting on in that tiresome dull London, if one isn't labelled and ticketed, somehow or other, for something. Rank there is a mere drug; and Irish rank goes for less than nothing. But a man, you know, who has been at Jerusalem! I defy you, by Jupiter, to throw a man in a corner, who has been at Jerusalem! You see how Lord Kilshandra got on, and Lord Stillorgan, after they had published their books, and got all those d——d hard names and jaw-breakers into them."

„You don't really mean to turn author," said the Princess, with one of her Miss Macguire comical looks.

„Faith, I don't know; but I give you my honour, my Journal is the most amusing thing you ever read. O'Mealy too has collected some

scraps of Jerusalem songs, which he learned from the little black-eyed daughters of Sion there, which I might introduce; there is one that begins — 'pon my honour, I forget it now: but it is all about *pooshum*, and *nooshum*, and is the sweetest little thing you ever heard, as O'Mealy sings it. He swears too, it's all Irish."

„O'Mealy!" almost screamed her Excellency, in a convulsion of laughter. „You are not really serious? You don't mean that O'Mealy went with you to Jerusalem?"

„Indeed he did, poor fellow, every foot of the way; and I was very near laving him behind me, in the valley of Jehosaphat, as we say in Jerusalem. For at a pic-nic dinner, that I gave at the pool of Bethesda, he drank more Greek wine than agreed with his head; and so he fell asleep under the cedars of Lebanon, within view of the temple of Solomon (the finest thing, upon my honour, you ever saw in your life, and every way superior to our parliament-house), where he caught a quinsey, which has left him no more voice than a frog: so, „*Othello's occupation's gone*," as he says himself, from the celebrated Shakspeare, and I, of course, am bound to provide for him."

„Provide for him!" said the Princess, still laughing, „why, he was handsomely provided for, when I left Ireland, as Sir Barnaby O'Mealy, lord of Bog Moy: for he took the Green Knighthood, on his marriage with old Miss Mac Taaf, in spite of the Red Book."

„Oh ! but that turned out a bad spec. The old girl was such a lawyer , that she kept what she could in her own hands ; and he run out all *he* could , sold the personals , brought the old house about her ears , shut her up in the Brigadier's tower , and then fled for the same. He got into trouble too , poor fellow ; was shortly after shut up for a time in gaol , then came to London , applied to me in his distress , and became my tiger ; and there he is , as large as life , 'pon my honour.”

„Where , where , for heaven's sake ?” said the Princess , taking up her glass.

„There ,” said Lord Kilcolman , „in the *parterre* , leaning over the back of the *parquet* , ogling that pretty little *citoyenne* in the *baig-noire* to the left.”

The Princess had no difficulty in detecting , in the flashy , dashing *ci-devant jeune homme* , whose bloated red face was set off by a pair of black moustaches , in addition to his original bushy well-powdered whiskers , the former led captain of Knocklofty House , and the *Primo Tenore* of the private theatricals of Dublin.

„Well , all this is much too droll ,” she exclaimed , more amused than she had been since she left Ireland. „I take it for granted , then , that if you and your tiger joined the allied army , on your return from Jerusalem , you are now prisoners of war , on parole.”

„Exactly , upon my honour : and never was

so happy in all my life. What between the Boulevards and the Champs Élysées, the cafés, and the estaminets, I will say, there is nothing in the world like the society of Paris — *Kyerie Eleison!* as we say in Jerusalem; what a difference, between Paris and London! But tell me, when did you hear any thing of the Knockloftys? I have lost sight of all that set for years."

„I had a letter to-day from the present Lady."

„The present lady! what do you mean? Is poor Albina dead?"

„Oh no! she is only Duchess of Ludlow; and her friend, Lady Honoria, is the present Lady Knocklofty."

„You amaze me, Kitty — Princess, I should say. What the devil does that all mane?"

„Why it means, that Lord Knocklofty got a divorce three years ago."

„A divorce! I thought it would come to that; who pays the damage?"

„Poor, good-natured, indolent Lord Charles, now Duke of Ludlow, whom you may remember in the Prince's Own in Dublin, some years back."

„Mashallah! as we say in Jerusalem, *est-il possible?* Why, when I left Ireland, she was talked of about that young, insolent, rebellious O'Brien, that she wanted to cram down the throats of every one, — he, who was hanged afterwards in the rebellion, or something of the sort, as O'Mealy tells me."

„He would have been hanged, or something

of that sort, said the Princess, laughing, „if he had not escaped from Kilmainham, where he was put up for a suspicion of murder, or libel, or both; but that affair of her Ladyship's blew over. Lord K. did not want to be bored, and would believe nothing — at least would *hear* nothing; though there was a strange story about a boat-house and a pony. When, however, the Knockloftys gave up Ireland, preparatory to the getting up of the Union (which Lord Knocklofty was the principal person in bringing about), and settled in London, they renewed their intimacy with Lord Charles, who, you know, was always a dowager fancier; and so, like all young men *qui se laissent aimer*, he made no resistance. The thing, however, might have gone on for ever; but Lady Knocklofty was vain of her conquest, and would have a scene: some say she was urged to it by Lady Honoria, who had lived with the Knockloftys ever since the death of Mr Stratton.

„But be that as it may, Lady K., one fine day, rubbed off her rouge, let down her hair, called her „friends, lovers, countrymen,” about her, made a speech from Lady Townly, acknowledged herself unworthy to be Countess Knocklofty any longer, stepped into a hackney coach, threw herself upon poor Lord Charles's honour, and is now, „Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded,” alias Duchess of Ludlow. Lady Honoria, however, who has taken her place, finds

that London *bon ton*, though headed by her beautiful friend, the Ex-Lady Lieutenant, will not admit Irish ladies into its particular set, who have been blown on in their own country. Besides, I believe Lady Honoria is altogether *trop prononcée* for the high societies of London; and I perceive by the tone of her letter, that, in the hope of a speedy peace, and the return of the emigrants to France, she is doing the honours by them all in London, *pour se ménager une retraite à Paris*, one of these days. This is all I know of the old set, most of whom I believe are dead: so no more reminiscences, for Heaven's sake. The Prince will be here immediately; and remember that we high transparencies are all *dans les hautes étiquettes*: so pray let go my hand, Lord K."

„Ah! Kitty, ye creature!" sighed Lord K., imploringly—but Kitty had resumed her *air de princesse*; and Lord Kilcolman, with a maudlin look, and an Irish sigh, sunk back in his *fauteuil*.

The orchestra now gave note of preparation for the commencement of the oratorio; and the throwing open of the box door announced the arrival of his Excellency the Hochfürstliche Durchlaucht, the Prince von Fustiburg, a sovereign prince of a thousand acres, and lord of the lives, properties, and liberties of as many subjects. He was a tall, meagre, formal, elderly gentleman, dressed in a court suit,

covered with orders, and glittering with stars. This *enfant gâté* of the Aulic Council of Vienna, and worthy disciple of its *déraison politique*, fanciend that he had come to Paris, to assist in settling the fate of nations; and he brought to the task, a mind made up for precedents, authorities, etiquettes, and all the rubbish of by-gone diplomacy, wholly inapplicable to the new order of things. Wrapt in the consciousness of his own importance, he was received and treated by the man, who then represented the spirit of the age, and was its type and sign, as his imperial master had been before him — *en grande ganache*!

The Princess presented the Earl of Kilcolman as an English Peer, a prisoner of war, an old friend, and a distinguished compatriot; and the Prince received him with all the ceremony due to his rank; offering him, as a preliminary courtesy, a pinch of snuff, from a box, the lid of which was illustrated by the most foolish face in Europe, set round with the most brilliant diamonds.

The ceremonial of presentation over, the Princess gave up her attention, not to the music, which had begun, but to the audience; and particularly to a side-box, within two of her own, to which every eye was now turned. The *grille* had been just lowered; and two officers, in general's uniforms, entered. The younger of the two came forward, and raising

his glass, seemed to reconnoitre the audience, whom his presence had thrown into movement, with great *sang-froid*.

„Who is that young General?” asked the Princess; „I mean the pale, sallow, thoughtful-looking one, with his hair divided on his forehead, and hanging *en oreilles de chien*?”

„*Mein Gott*,” said the Prince, *es ist der Consul*, 'tis the General Bonaparte.”

The Princess and Lord Kilcolman both rose in eager curiosity, and fixed their eyes intently on one who was then fixing the gaze of worlds: they were so near the box of the First Consul, as to hear him say in his clear, sharp voice, to an officer, who entered, „*Et Joséphine*?”

The arrival of Madame Bonaparte was the reply to this inquiry, which was made in some emotion; and the First Consul coolly added, „*Ces coquins-là ont voulu me faire sauter. Rapp, faites-moi apporter l'imprimé de l'oratorio*.”

There was at this moment a simultaneous rising a general murmur of applause expressed that the Consul at that moment excited some very lively and powerful interest. The fine music of Haydn went for nothing; and the plaudits of the audience were loud and long.

„*Qu'est-ce que cela veut dire, Monsieur de Vaudrémont*?” demanded the Prince, of a gentleman who had just entered the box, pale, fluttered, and in evident emotion.

„*Cela veut dire*,” said Monsieur de Vaudré-

mont, „that the audience have just heard, that the first consul, in his way to the opera, was near being blown up by the explosion of an infernal machine, and that the police, for once, have been taken *au dépourvu*.”

„*Mein Gott! mein Gott!*” said the Prince, „is it possible, *der Mann des Schicksals*?” *

„*Eh, mon Dieu, oui,*” said the ex-noble, „*on ne peut s'empêcher de reconnaître dans ses destinées une providence, qui l'a marqué de loin pour l'accomplissement de ses vues.*”

„Count,” said the Princess, „what an admirer you are of Bonaparte, you, who were such a devoted adherent of the Bourbons!”

„*Eh, ... eh, ... eh, que voulez-vous?*” replied the page of Marie Antoinette, afterwards *chambellan* of the Empress Marie Louise, and *gentilhomme de la chambre* to Charles the Tenth; — one, who represented in his person that particular class of the French nobility, who had been the first to fly their country in its exigency, and to avail themselves (in its prosperity) of the amnesty in favour of the *prévenus d'émigration*. The idol of the aristocratic coteries of London, where he had been received as *l'homme immobile de la monarchie*, the Count de Vaudrémont, had accepted a little mission of courtesy from Louis XVIII. at the court of

* The man of destiny; the name then given by the Germans to Bonaparte.

Vienna; but instead of returning to play whist in the modest parlours of Hartwell, he was the first to get his name „*rayé*, and to *faire anti-chambre* to the Bonapartes, under the magnificent towers of the Bourbons. Admirably fitted by his old courtly habits of gossip and *médianse*, to administer to the master weakness of Napoleon, he became the founder of *la police de caquetage*, which afterwards so deeply embittered the life of his employer; and he was as rarely missed from the saloons of St-Cloud, where he played *saute-mouton* for the amusement of the consular family, as from the state apartments of the Tuileries, where he taught the *parvenus* of the day the etiquettes, in which they soon learned to excel their teacher: for the forms that impose most, are those most easily acquired.

The first act of the Creation was now finished, when a box which had hitherto remained closed, near to that of the prince, was thrown open, and a general officer, attended by his two aides-de-camp, came forward. He was rendered conspicuous by being the only General present who did not wear the new decoration of the Legion of Honour; for though many of the military accepted it with reluctance, few had the courage to refuse what all considered as a return to old institutions. This was probably remarked by a little party of Liberals in the pit, who rose, and cheered the person more distin-

guished by the absence of that mark of note than he could have been by its adoption. The general, however, had possibly some other claims to popularity; for the manner in which he was received by the audience, seemed no less marked and empathic than that of the Chief Consul; though the applause was much less universally bestowed.

The person, thus noticed, was in the very prime of life, of lofty stature, and commanding air; and so distinguished by personal advantages, that the Princess, fixing her lorgnette steadily at him, asked, „Who is that magnificent looking person, Monsieur de Vaudrémont? I think I have seen him before.”

„*Ha! par exemple!*” said the Ex-Count, who had the *Mémoires du genre humain* at his fingers' ends, „that is, or would be a personage, a modern Alcibiades: like the Athenian General, he has figured as a statesman, a soldier, and a philosopher; *d'ailleurs fort joli garçon.*”

„But, who is he?” asked the Princess, still fixing her glass.

„He is one of our Generals *mal vus*, ‘*un Général suspect.*’ He belongs to a faction equally violent against royalists and jacobins; although the First Consul, in his wisdom, has set the example of a necessary fusion of parties, by admitting the Ex-Grand-Seigneur, Talleyrand, and the Ex-Montagnard Fouché, to his councils and confidence ——”

„But who is he? again interrupted the Princess, with increasing curiosity and earnestness.

„He is one of the heroes of the Italian campaign, though you see he is not decorated with the new order of the Legion of Honour. In fact, he is at the head of those officers who have shown the most decided repugnance to its establishment; and he even had the insolence to tell the First Consul the other day, that such distinctions '*n'étaient que les hochets du despotisme*:' to which Bonaparte replied, '*Eh bien, c'est avec des hochets qu'on a toujours mené les hommes*.'"

„But his name?" said the Princess, „his name first, and memoirs after! — his name?"

„It is General O'Brien, an Irishman by birth. Those Irishmen! *nous en avons comme s'il en pleuvait*.

The Princess almost started, and exchanged a significant look with Lord Kilcolman, whose operaglass followed the direction of her own, while she muttered in English, „I thought so; Lady Knocklofty's *hero*, something changed, but not disimproved."

„By Jupiter, I believe so," said Lord Kilcolman.

„But it's impossible — a fellow like that, that no one would speak to in Ireland! — he a General in the French service! and little Boney, so clever and clearsighted. Poh! 'tis impossible."

„'Tis true, however," said the Princess, still speaking English; „it is not easy to mistake him."

„Nor to forget him either," said Lord Kilcolman, with the air of a man who had a right to be piqued.

„These Irishmen, continued Mons. de Vaudrémont, „*se fourrent partout*. There are the Generals Clarke, Lawless, Harty, Kilmaine, *et tant d'autres*.

„All of whom,” muttered Lord Kilcolman, „would have run the risk of being hanged, had they staid at home.”

„*Plait-il?*” demanded the Ex-count.

„Oh! nothing,” replied the Princess, smiling; „only my Lord observes that had these Generals remained at home, they would, no doubt, have been *elevated* as they deserve.”

„*Eh! sans doute! ce sont de braves gens.* There's General Clarke, for instance, who, from a simple lieutenant, has become —”

„Never mind General Clarke, tell us more of General O'Brien,” said the Princess, impatiently.

„*Et! voilà les femmes!*” shrugged the Prince; „*qu'un homme soit beau!*”

„*Eh bien,*” interrupted the Princess, and addressing the Count.

„Well, this Irish General is a perfect hero of romance. He narrowly escaped being hanged in Ireland, as some of his countrymen here relate; for the Irish have always a *coup de patte* to bestow upon each other. But, *c'est égal*. Thrown on the coast of France, where he was driven by stress of weather, having escaped from his own country in an open boat, he was taken up for a spy — sent to Paris — did not give what was deemed as satisfactory account of himself, — and had a letter found on his person signed by the noted aristocrat, the Prince de Ligne. That was enough. *Pardi!* he was condemned — ordered for execution — thrown into a dungeon, in order to be sent with the next batch to the guillotine, on the following morning; and *that* morning — it was the 9th Thermidor. Then arrived the insurrection, which ended in the death of Robespierre; and nothing more was thought for months of the prisoners, till a *sœur de charité* (an order tolerated when

religion itself was proscribed), took up the mission of seeking out the victims which the atrocious Robespierre had left to pine in their dungeons; *et voilà mon général*, not only restored to liberty, but actually discovering in the present *ancien évêque de C*—— (the celebrated Abbé O'Flaherty, so influential in the Convention), an old friend and near relation. Well, this O'Brien *a de l'esprit*, and a great talent for popular writing. He was immediately employed, became the Magnus Apollo of Cambacérès, Boissy d'Anglas, Carnot, and others, who have since styled themselves Constitutional Liberals. But this did not last long. The royalist reaction broke out, and took the *dessus*: *et voilà mon drôle qui s'insurge!* and narrowly escaped deportation, or worse; and now, seeing clearly enough that existing arrangements were but provisional, and that nothing permanent was possible, except war, forthwith our modern Alcibiades quitted the senate and took the field, and, for once in his life, he was right. The army was his true vocation. He was bred, *sous tente*, and distinguished himself in every campaign, till, from a simple volunteer, he has become *comme vous le voyez*, a Lieutenant-General of the Republic. In the campaigns of Italy he performed prodigies of valour, was soon found out and distinguished by Bonaparte; but is now risking all, by opposing the First Consul in every effort to bring back social order. 'General,' said the First Consul to him, immediately after the inauguration of the *Concordat* in Notre Dame, '*Général, comment avez-vous trouvé la cérémonie?*'

„*Il n'y manquait*' (replied the hot-headed Irishman) '*qu'un million d'hommes, qui ont été*

*tués, pour détruire ce que vous rétablissez.** And yet this man is cried up for his talent, and lives with Cabanis, and all the philosophers! — *Ah! que les gens d'esprit sont bêtes.*"

The Princess and the Peer had only withdrawn their eyes from the subject of these details, to exchange looks with each other. They had, from the first mention of his name, recognized in the French General, the unfortunate Lord Arranmore; and though much changed, — though the gloss and glow of youth were all dimmed and faded, — yet in his fine melancholy and marked countenance, they still detected that peculiar beauty of a passionate and energetic expression, which had first attracted the attention of Albina Countess of Knocklofty, at the review in the Phoenix Park. But the melancholy which clouded his brow, and seemed its habitual character, dispersed like mid-day vapours from before a summer's sun, as he turned round to give his hand to a lady, who entered the box, leaning on the arm of a gentleman *en habit bourgeois*.

„By Jupiter! what a beautiful woman," exclaimed Lord Kilcolman. „What a dress! she looks like the priestess of the sun, in the new ballet."

„*Ah! voilà la fin du roman!*" said the Count, taking snuff. „Madame Bonaparte has been called *la bonne étoile* of the sun, my lord, is *la mauvaise étoile de notre Général*; she it is that governs him and misleads him in his present opposition."

„Ah! for heaven's sake, *contez-nous cela,*"

* „General, what do you think of the ceremony?"

„It wanted nothing but the million of men who have been slain, to destroy all that you are now restoring."

said the Princess, with renewed earnestness and interest in the subject.

„Some pretend that this priestess of the sun, who is an *ex-religieuse*, is neither more or less than the very sister of charity, who restored the General to liberty; and it is well known that she is 'the Lady of Lodi' (as she is called in a little vaudeville written on the subject) who defended herself in her château on the banks of the Adda, where she lived in great retreat, at the head of a sort of semi-religious society. She is very rich, and inherits the wealth of a certain Jesuit uncle, whose name I forget. The château was attacked by a skirmishing party of French soldiers, whom she kept at bay till the arrival of the main army; when, throwing herself at the feet of the General of division, he recognized in the heroine of Lodi, *la sœur de charité*; and permitted her to march out of her fortress *tambour battant*, and with all the honours of war — *Vous devinez, Madame la Princesse, le dénouement*? The General and his captive were married shortly after the battle of Lodi, at Milan, in the presence of Bonaparte. The bridegroom was ordered from the altar of the Duomo, to the siege of Mantua; and before he rejoined his bride in Paris, the army of Italy, accomplishing the great work of the revolution, sent back its heroes to be crowned in the Capitol.

„In the interval which has occurred since the treaty of Campo Formio, the constitutional party has begun an energetic but unavailing opposition to the measures of the First Consul; and this faction has no more active members than the General and Madame O'Brien. Of her, one may say, as my friend Talleyrand said, the other night, of another

pretty woman. '*C'est la tête de Cromwell sur le corps d'une jolie femme.*' Graceful, eloquent, adroit, and veiling all under a air of simplicity and *bonhomie*, she is, in fact, a perfect Aspasia, and is exercising *sur notre belle jeunesse de France*, the same influence which her prototype obtained over the Athenian youth; *enfin, c'est une femme très-dangereuse*, and it is thought will soon receive an order to quit Paris. *En attendant*, her saloons are nightly crowded with malcontents: you are sure of meeting there Lanjuinais, Grégoire, Garat, Le Noir, La Roche, Constant, Chenier, and the celebrated Cabanis (with whom she now entered the box), all of whom are occupied *en faisant des empiétemens*, on the new system, which can only end in their own ruin — *comme de raison.*"

Here the dropping of the curtain and the rising of the consular family were signals for the Austrian Prince and the *ci-devant homme immobile de la monarchie*, to hurry to pay their respects to the First Consul, on his escape from assassination. Madame la Princesse, giving her arm to the Earl of Kilcolman, asked, „And now, Lord K., who do you think the *héroïne de Lodi* turns out to be?"

„Upon my honour," said the Earl, „I have not the laste idaye; but she is one of the finest looking creatures I ever saw though not in her teens. What luck that O'Brien has always had.

„Why, is it possible you do not remember her? She is very little changed, except that she has more *embonpoint*, and is differently dressed."

„Give you my honour and soul I have no recollection who she is — not the laste in life."

„She is, as the Count would say, *ni plus ni moins* than Madame O'Flaherty, the Superior of that Irish convent, where —”

„What Irish convent?”

„Oh! I thought you had been of our gipsy party among the mountains of Connemara, where this Aspasia — but the crowd is intolerable; will you come and sup at the embassy?”

„I will, with all my heart and soul,” replied Lord Kilcolman, backing his way through the multitude (all hurrying to see the First Consul pass), with shoulders only manufactured in Tipperary.

„I'll tell you all then;” said the Princess. „There is, I assure you, *de quoi faire un roman*, if it were well treated.”

„And why not write it yourself?” said Lord Kilcolman, pressing the fair arm that leaned upon his: „you are such a *talented* creature!”

„If I did every body would say I put them into my book,” said the Princess, „for all the blockheads and blockheadesses think themselves printable; and draw what you may, ‘each cries, that was levelled at him.’”

„Upon my honour that's the *raison* I prefer writing my journey to Jerusalem. I defy any one to take offence at a book written just about nothing at all.”

„Don't be too sure of that,” said her Excellency.

THE END.

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